

SANTA FE RIGHT-OF-WAY: ANALYSIS REPORT

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	5
CONTEXT TEAM	6
Historical Background	6
A Brief History of the Santa Fe Railroad in Berkeley	6
City Acquisition, Development, and Plans	6
The 1977 Plan	7
Subsequent Actions on the Right-of-Way	7
The Berkeley Depot Site.....	8
The Present.....	8
Demographic Analysis.....	9
Methodology	9
Analysis.....	10
Crime Statistics	12
The University Avenue Strategic Plan	15
General Plan	16
Citizen Participation.....	16
Land Use	16
Open Space and Recreation	17
Housing	17
Economic Development and Employment.....	17
Bicycle Plan.....	18
Bikeway Definitions	18
SITE ANALYSIS TEAM	20
Introduction	20
Block-By-Block Observation of the Northern Portion.....	20
Addison Street to University Avenue	22
University Avenue to Berkeley Way	22
Berkeley Way to Hearst Avenue.....	22
Hearst Avenue to Delaware Street.....	22
Delaware Street to Francisco Street.....	23
Francisco Street to Virginia Street.....	23
Virginia Street to Lincoln Street.....	24
Lincoln Street to Cedar Rose Park.....	24
Block-By-Block Observation of the Southern Portion	24
Russell Street to Ward Street.....	26
Ward Street to Derby Street.....	26
Derby Street to Parker Street	26
Parker Street to Dwight Way	27
Dwight Way to Channing Way.....	27
Channing Way to Bancroft Way.....	27
Use Observation.....	28
Strawberry Creek Park.....	28
Northern Unplanned Section of Santa Fe Right-of-Way	29
Cedar Rose Park.....	29

Possibilities and Constraints	29
Community Gardens and Orchards.....	29
Recreational Parks	30
Bicycle and Pedestrian Paths	30
Housing.....	30
SURVEY TEAM	31
Creating the Survey.....	31
Conducting the Survey	31
Challenges of Conducting the Survey	32
Survey Data.....	32
Survey Results	42
Survey Key Points	43
Survey Map	44
STAKEHOLDER TEAM.....	45
Interview Format.....	45
Housing Groups	45
Economic Development Interests.....	46
Religious Groups.....	47
Senior Citizens Homes and Organizations	47
Neighborhood Groups	48
Disability Rights Groups	50
Garden Groups.....	50
Schools	53
City Commissions and Departments	54
Parks and Bicycle Groups	55
Consensus Proposal	56
Other Ideas for Usage	57
CONCLUSION	58

INTRODUCTION

This report assessing current and potential uses of the Santa Fe Right-of-Way was assembled by class members of the Undergraduate Planning Studio at the University of California at Berkeley. The decision to focus on the Santa Fe Right-of-Way is in response to a growing interest by the City of Berkeley and concerned citizens, as to what future use, if any, should be made of the land.

We approached our analysis of the right-of-way from several different angles in hopes of creating a document that best captures all facets. The class was split into four teams, each with a unique task. The Context Team was responsible for gathering historical, crime and demographic data as well as determining how the right-of-way relates to the existing General Plan and Bicycle Plan. The Site Analysis and Mapping Team had the task of producing a large-format base map along with a graphic analysis of current land uses on the right-of-way. The Survey Team developed a survey that was administered throughout neighborhoods on the right-of-way and analyzed the results. The Stakeholder Team interviewed groups and citizens involved or affected by potential development on the right-of-way.

In addition to the data research work we did in teams, our class also spent several days together on the right-of-way in an attempt to better understand the nature of the right-of-way. We walked along the entire strip, observing the community's relation to the right-of-way, physical signs of land use, existing development on the right-of-way and other characteristics hitherto indeterminable from the existing literature.

This document represents the culmination of each team's findings as well as our overall impressions on the current discussion about developing on the right-of-way in the near future. In addition to exploring questions our team had regarding the right-of-way, we also attempted to incorporate as much of the current dialogue into our analysis and recommendations as possible.

CONTEXT TEAM

Historical Background

A Brief History of the Santa Fe Railroad in Berkeley

Beginning in the late 1800s, the Atcheson, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railway (ATSF), known commonly as the Santa Fe, ran transcontinental service that ended at a ferry terminus in Richmond, from where cargo and passengers were then ferried to San Francisco and other Bay Area destinations. In 1904, after acquiring the existing right-of-way of another railway, Santa Fe launched the Oakland Local, an extension that carried freight and passengers from present-day Point Richmond, through Berkeley, to the 40th and San Pablo Station in Oakland.

In the 1930's, however, use of automobiles and electric trains on East Bay streets and bridges began to quickly supplant passenger traffic from the Oakland Local line. By the mid-1950's Santa Fe discontinued passenger service on the Oakland Local, replacing it with connecting bus service from Richmond. Freight cars continued to run on the line until mounting civic concerns and dwindling operating benefits led Santa Fe to abandon the right-of-way used by the Oakland Local. In the late 1970's, Santa Fe sought to reroute its remaining freight traffic onto the nearby Southern Pacific right-of-way, which had about 10 at-grade (street level) crossings, as opposed to around 40 on its own. After approval in 1978 by the Interstate Commerce Commission, the federal agency governing fair use of rail lines, ATSF shifted its service to Southern Pacific's rails, and in 1979, Berkeley and Oakland residents ceremoniously bid farewell to the last train to roll on the Santa Fe tracks.

City Acquisition, Development, and Plans

The City of Berkeley held long-standing opposition to the continuing operation of rail service through the central city because of conspicuous negative impacts. Trains produced noise and were obstacles to cross streets in both business and residential neighborhoods. According to a 1977 city assessment of the Santa Fe tracks, the largest of these impacts was safety, which was evidenced by people being killed and maimed by passing trains. Eventually the city formalized its opposition to the railroad in 1965 by offering a proposal to acquire the right-of-way as an urban renewal project to be supported by a tax increment financing scheme, but because of the large scale failure of urban renewal efforts across the nation, the City Council, which was designated to be the redevelopment agency for the project, rejected the proposal.

In 1970, as a response to Santa Fe's desire to move its remaining freight operations to the Southern Pacific tracks that ran near the shoreline (through West Berkeley, near present day Aquatic Park and 4th Street), the city drew up a \$6,500,000 comprehensive bond measure to not only acquire the Santa Fe Right-Of-Way but to develop it as a park and bikeway along its entire length, create a new city corporation yard, and redevelop the existing corporation yard into a park. The measure failed to reach a two-thirds majority, achieving around 50% approval. Subsequently, in both 1971 and 1973, measures solely intended to acquire the right-of-way for \$970,000 also

appeared on the ballot, but only achieved around 60% approval each, still short of a two-thirds majority.

In the fall of 1974, the City Council placed Measure Y on the ballot, which was an increase in property taxes to fund open space and park acquisition and development throughout the city. Acquisition of the right-of-way was promoted but was not obligated by the passing of the measure. Measure Y was approved, and a plan from 1977 designated \$539,400 for acquisition and open space development on the 3.1 mile stretch of the Santa Fe Right-of-Way through Berkeley, with the exception of the depot site located on University Ave., which was to remain property of ATSF. In December of 1978, the City Council approved the acquisition, and by 1979, they had also approved the development of the right-of-way for park land, housing, and sale to neighboring residents. After ceasing use of the right-of-way, ATSF was obligated to remove their tracks, crossings, and signaling equipment, as had been mandated by the original right-of-way agreement from the city upon termination of the railroad franchise.

The 1977 Plan

In anticipation of acquiring the Santa Fe Right-Of-Way, in the spring of 1977, the City Council called for a comprehensive study of the right-of-way's development potential to be done by a task force comprised of several city departments, including planning, housing, transportation, and parks and recreation. The study, entitled "Santa Fe Right of Way: Assessment of Alternative Use Potentials," divided development options into two categories: development of the right-of-way as open space, or mixed-use development which would include housing development in addition to open space. Furthermore, the study integrated exploring possibilities for neighboring sites along the right-of-way whose development future was undecided.

Although at the time of the creation of the report the right-of-way was contiguous and undeveloped, the report concluded that strictly open space development options on the right-of-way, such as a bikeway or a long linear park, would be problematic due to questions of underutilization, vandalism, large capital construction costs, and maintenance costs. Instead, the task force concluded that a mixed-use approach could generate funds to finance individual projects, help the city to meet its housing demand, and still provide some degree of open space and recreation. The plan included a number of site plans for areas on and along the right-of-way, some of which did materialize into developments that resemble the suggestions in this 1977 plan. In the long range, however, the plan's suggested policies of mixed-use development along the full length of the right-of-way were never implemented.

Subsequent Actions on the Right-of-Way

Since the acquisition in 1978, the city has created two major parks on the right-of-way. Cedar-Rose Park lies at the northern end of the right-of-way, bordering the Ohlone Greenway that was placed when BART was built, and Strawberry Creek Park is located in the central portion, where the portion of Strawberry Creek culverted to make way for the railway was day lit. The only housing built on the right-of-way was six units between Dwight and Channing Way. Opposition to housing built on open space, however, led to voter approval of Measure L in 1986, which mandated that all remaining open space be preserved as such, although in 1993 the City Council approved the sale of parcels on the

right-of-way to a few adjacent property owners between Channing and Dwight Way. For the most part though, throughout the 1980's and 1990's large sections of the right-of-way remained undeveloped, with some portions fenced off, while others remained accessible to the public. The city continues to perform basic maintenance on the right-of-way as it does for turf medians and other undeveloped open space.

The Berkeley Depot Site

In May 1904, the launch of the Santa Fe passenger line through Berkeley also marked the opening of the Santa Fe rail depot at present day 1310 University Ave. Designed in the style of a mission by Charles Whittlesey, the depot functioned as a stop for Oakland Local passenger service until its termination in the 1950's and as a bus terminal for connecting bus service from Richmond until its termination in the 1960's. After ceding the right-of-way to the city, ATSF retained ownership of the depot structure and site. After remodeling, the depot operated as a restaurant, the fittingly-named Santa Fe Bar and Grill, which operated until 2000.

After its sale of the right-of-way, ATSF had undergone corporate restructuring, leading to the parent companies of Santa Fe and Southern Pacific in the early 1980s to tentatively merge their railways, pending government approval. As part of this merger, Catellus Development Corporation was formed to manage the real estate properties owned by the railways, such as the Berkeley depot. In 1987, however, the Interstate Commerce Commission struck down the proposed merger. As a result, in 1989, Catellus was spun off as an independent company to ATSF stockholders, but retained ownership of the various properties of the railways.

The Present

In June 2001, Catellus sold the Berkeley depot site to the Berkeley Montessori School, which was looking for a site to relocate its school to from its structurally problematic North Berkeley location. As part of its development of the site, the School agreed to provide public access to the right-of-way if a pedestrian/bicycle was to be built. Around the same time, in mid-2001, the city obtained a grant of \$1,000,000 from the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's Housing Incentive Program (HIP), a part of their Transportation for Livable Communities initiative, which gives grants to cities in exchange for housing constructed near transportation corridors.

With public support from organizations such as Berkeley Partners for Parks, in April 2002, the City Council approved the money from the HIP grant, along with approximately \$100,000 in matching funds from the city, to be appropriated toward the construction of a bicycle/pedestrian pathway along the Santa Fe Right-of-Way from Delaware St. south to University Ave., connecting with the Berkeley Montessori School site and Strawberry Creek Park. In February 2003, the city issued a Request for Qualifications, seeking design consultants for the development of the pathway, and the Montessori School began construction on their new campus, which is slated to open in February 2004.

Although the project to develop a pathway along this northern portion of the right-of-way has started, in 2000 and 2001, Berkeley City Councilmember Linda Maio provided a platform for housing development efforts on the right-of-way by introducing amendments to the city's General Plan to specifically leave open the options of housing

on the right-of-way. In response to public opposition, Maio withdrew the amendment in March 2002, and the city's designation of funds toward the University to Delaware pathway affirmed that housing would not be constructed along the central portions of the right-of-way.

Aside from the Montessori school and nearby pathway, at the southern end of the right-of-way, the Building Opportunities for Self-Sufficiency (BOSS) Urban Gardening Institute (BUGI) is pursuing another community-oriented development on the right-of-way. Occupying the tail end of the right-of-way near Russell Street, BUGI seeks to develop urban gardens that would supply food to homeless shelters run by BOSS, train individuals in urban gardening, and raise funds through the operation of a retail nursery. In early 2003, BUGI completed its negotiations with the City of Berkeley to lease the right-of-way land and is currently in the initial stages of developing its work site.

Demographic Analysis

In order to fully understand potential reuse opportunities for the Santa Fe Right-of-Way (the right-of-way), we must examine the communities that surround it. The right-of-way intersects several distinctly different neighborhoods that will each have different ideas about what kind of development, if any, should go on the right-of-way. Our demographic analysis hopes to shed a light on how each neighborhood is different and conjecture on some possibilities on how this might affect the development on the right-of-way.

Methodology

One way of analyzing the characteristics of a community is by measuring demographic information using US Census Bureau data. By looking at the statistics on the census tract level, we can find out how demographics in each neighborhood change and also compare them relative to the whole city. In our statistical analysis we separated the right-of-way into three equal portions equating to three census tracts that the right-of-way lies on: Oregon to Dwight, Dwight to University and University to Cedar; all of which are bounded on the west and east by San Pablo Ave and Sacramento Street respectively. Each tract is distinctly different – Oregon to Dwight's section of the right-of-way is closest to the commercial buildings on Sacramento Street, Dwight to University already contains an existing park (Strawberry Creek) while University to Cedar has a BART station as well as Cedar-Rose Park and the Ohlone Greenway nearby. The right-of-way runs through the middle of each tract; it is most likely a fairly accurate representation of the people that live around the right-of-way.

Taking the three tracts, we used the location quotient method to compare the concentration of each demographic relative to the concentration in all of Berkeley. We did this by comparing the percentage of a given demographic within the census tract and weighting it by the percentage of the given demographic throughout the whole city of Berkeley. The formula for a location quotient is given as:

$$LQ = \frac{\% \text{ CensusTract}}{\% \text{ Berkeley}}$$



Figure C1. Three Census Tracts in the Vicinity of the Santa Fe Right-of-Way

Therefore, a location quotient with a value less than one means that the percentage in the census tract is less relative to the entire city, a location quotient greater than one means the census tract has a higher concentration compared to the entire city and a location quotient of exactly one means the census tract and the city have equal proportions of that demographic. The advantage to using location quotients as a measurement as opposed to just comparing percentage figures among tracts is that location quotients are relative values rather than absolute, so differences among census tracts are weighted by a standard value and thus easier to interpret.

Analysis

	Oregon-Dwight	Dwight-University	University-Cedar
Race			
White	0.44	0.77	0.93
Black	3.94	1.65	1.20
Native American	1.21	1.37	0.43
Asian	0.34	0.63	0.92
Hispanic/Latino	1.19	2.02	1.08
Pacific Islander	2.44	0.88	0.52
Other	0.95	0.90	1.26
Age			
Under 18	1.46	1.27	1.08
18-30	0.53	0.60	0.72
30-40	1.12	1.19	1.33
40-50	1.08	1.19	1.15
50-60	0.93	0.98	1.08
60-70	1.11	1.04	0.95
70+	1.65	1.36	0.92

Table C1. Location Quotients for Race and Age

Table C1 illustrates the location quotients for race and age in each of the three census tracts. A number that stands out is the relatively high concentration of African-Americans and Pacific Islanders in the Oregon-Dwight section of the right-of-way. It is important that these groups get a sufficient opportunity to participate in the planning and decision making process. In addition, any survey methods that attempt to capture a representative neighborhood sample should keep in mind the age and race distributions.

Income distribution may be an important factor in what each neighborhood may want to see (or not see) on the right-of-way. Income statistics may help explain why some neighborhoods vehemently oppose affordable housing while other neighborhoods place safety and crime prevention at the top of their priority list. If there is an opportunity, it may be in the community’s best interest to use the right-of-way in a way that assists the poor in a pragmatic way. Table C2 shows income distribution by location quotient as well as those below and above the poverty level.

Current transportation modes may also factor into deciding potential uses for the right-of-way. Looking at what forms of transportation people currently use can give us insight into whether or not residents may desire and utilize the right-of-way as a means of transportation. Given the North Berkeley BART station is within the University-Cedar tract there is a much higher usage.

	Oregon-Dwight	Dwight-University	University-Cedar
Income			
Less than \$15,000	1.12	0.97	0.84
\$15,000 - \$29,999	1.20	1.32	1.20
\$30,000 - \$49,999	1.34	1.24	1.08
\$50,000 - \$74,999	1.11	1.01	1.09
\$75,000 - \$99,999	0.99	1.35	1.49
\$100,000 +	0.35	0.40	0.63
Poverty Level			
Below poverty level	18.43%	11.43%	16.12%
Above poverty level	81.57%	88.57%	83.88%

Table C2. Location Quotients for Income and Percentage Under/Above Poverty Level

Also existing bike routes run roughly parallel to the right-of-way, connecting all three neighborhoods, but bicycle usage is markedly low. Buses and automobiles have a much higher rate of usage relative to the rest of Berkeley, perhaps because of the right-of-way’s proximity to major thoroughfares like University Avenue and Sacramento Street. Table C3 shows the location quotients for modes of transportation. The interpretation of these figures can be somewhat ambiguous. It is hard to tell whether or not the lack of pedestrian and bicycle usage is because residents don’t have sufficient access to a good bike/walking path or that they just prefer to ride the bus or drive a car. Looking further into traffic and parking data may give a better indication of residential preferences.

	Oregon-Dwight	Dwight-University	University-Cedar
Transportation			
Car, truck or van	1.22	1.09	1.01
Bus, streetcar	1.97	1.54	1.22
BART	0.59	0.84	1.34
Railroad, ferry, taxi	0	1.56	0.63
Motorcycle	1.72	0.82	0
Bicycle	0.52	1.36	0.83
Walk	0.20	0.42	0.68
Other	2.16	0	1.79

Table C3. Location Quotients for Traffic

The degree to which the community participates in the advocacy process dictates how well the desires of that community are met. If there is relatively little interest in participating, a neighborhood may wind up with a development that will accord with a bureaucrat’s vision rather than the community’s. Differentiating between home owners and renters is important in terms of community participation and also what each group may want. A large concentration of home owners might imply lower density, residential homes and a population that is geared towards keeping it that way. They are also more likely to be involved in neighborhood organizations and other groups that advocate for neighborhood-specific needs. A large concentration of renters may signal that there is less concern for property values or long term effects on the neighborhood and may just be focused on using the development to solve short-term problems rather than looking at the larger picture. It may also be the case that a community of renters wouldn’t view the right-of-way as something that they should even have a say in and may choose to abstain from voicing their opinion. Table C4 shows the location quotients for tenure, the measure of ownership or rentership, in each tract. The Oregon-Dwight neighborhood has a particularly high owner occupied concentration which might indicate that although it is one of the poorer neighborhoods, residents have a stake in the community and may have a concern for development on the right-of-way. The right-of-way could be seen as an opportunity to involve residents in the planning process through charettes and workshops and also on the right-of-way itself through a community-minded development such as a community garden or park.

	Oregon-Dwight	Dwight-University	University-Cedar
Tenure			
Owner Occupied	1.23	0.99	0.99
Renter Occupied	0.82	0.99	1.01

Table C4. Location Quotients for Tenure

Crime Statistics

One of the critical pieces of data to examine is crime statistics in relation to the Santa Fe Right-of-Way. In general, the Berkeley Police Department tracks crime throughout the city in two ways: by census tract and by beat reports. As noted above, the land beside the Santa Fe Right-of-Way is covered by three census tracts and three beats bounded roughly by San Pablo Avenue to the west, Sacramento Street to the east, Hopkins Street to the north and Ashby Avenue to the south. The census tract reports

offer tabulations of all major crimes ranging from homicide and rape to auto theft and arson. In comparison, the beat reports offer a targeted look at where the crimes occur throughout the city, which can show specific crimes in a one to two block radius of the right-of-way. In analyzing both reports, we paid specific attention to overall crime rates in the three census tracts and compared them to the rest of the city. More specifically, the beat reports allowed us to see if there are any hot spots of crime near the right-of-way. In our analysis, we found that the area between Dwight Way and University Avenue in general has a higher amount of crime than the other two census tracts. The statistics imply that a greater amount of neighborhood awareness and police protection would be beneficial for the area bounded by a two block radius of University Avenue and the right-of-way.

According to census tract data, burglary, theft and automobile theft hold the highest crime statistics in the city — theft being the higher of the three. The tract between Dwight Way and University Avenue has the highest reported number of major offenses compared to the two other tracts along the right-of-way (Table C5). In 2001, the three tracts that encompass the right-of-way were responsible for 9.1% of Berkeley’s major crimes. Crime data from 1990 reports a similar citywide comparison, with the three tracts accounting for 9.2% of total crimes, indicating that the relative crime rate in these census tracts have remained steady in the past decade. Compared to other census tracts within the city, the tracts that encompass the right-of-way experience an average amount of crime. The following table is a breakdown of major crimes occurring in the census tracts that enclose the right-of-way.

	Ashby-Dwight	Dwight-University	University-Cedar
Homicide	0	0	0
Rape	1	1	1
Robbery	14	9	19
Aggravated Assault	23	19	19
Burglary	30	52	35
Theft	103	203	113
Auto Theft	29	49	36
Arson	1	4	2
Tract Total	201	337	225
% of Major Crimes Citywide	2.40%	4.00%	2.70%

Table C5. Crime Statistics along the Santa Fe Right-of-Way in 2001

Beat reports tabulate specific crime data on a block by block basis with the exact date and time of the crime. The right-of-way occupies three beats similar to the U.S. Census tract layouts. Robbery had the highest account of reported crimes within a two-block radius of the right-of-way from September 2002 to February 2003. We found 60 reported crimes of robbery and theft within two blocks of the Santa Fe Right-of-Way, as plotted on Figure C2. The 1400 block of Addison Street, which is one block from the right-of-way, has shown a significantly high amount of break-ins and automobile theft. The 2200 block of Bonar Street, adjacent to the Santa Fe Right-of-Way, seems to also be a hot spot for burglary; it has experienced three burglaries and one stolen automobile



Figure C2. Crime Locations Relative to the Santa Fe Right-of-Way

within a five month period. The blocks bounded by Delaware Street to the north, Sacramento Street to the east, Addison Street to the south, and Bonar and Chestnut Streets to the west, has experienced 23 reported burglaries and automobile thefts. These numbers imply that the corridor and adjacent streets on University Avenue experience a higher amount of robberies and auto theft. These figures are also consistent with census tract data and should be put into consideration when thinking about public safety and development on the right-of-way section, which crosses University Avenue.

While we have found that overall crime activity that occurs near the right-of-way is similar to that throughout the city, plans for development on the right-of-way should nevertheless acknowledge potential crime hot spots along major thoroughfares and pay close attention to the issue of public safety.

The University Avenue Strategic Plan

In looking at current city plans, the University Avenue Strategic Plan, adopted by the City of Berkeley in 1996, has outlined specific recommendations for the Santa Fe Right-of-Way. The policy recommendations in the Urban Design and Transportation sections of the Strategic Plan and the strategic design of Sub Area 2, encompass the right-of-way. These policies recommend that the land adjacent to Strawberry Creek Park, along West Street, be developed into a continuous greenway and bike path. The development of the right-of-way into an extended greenway should pay attention to potential problems of traffic congestion and pedestrian/bicycle safety. Public safety can be improved with a using lighting and raised pavements. The development of the right-of-way into a greenway could be a benefit to the area aesthetically and could fit into a larger network of parks by eventually connecting to the Ohlone Greenway. However, proper planning for traffic, pedestrian/bicycle, and public safety are key in integrating the Santa Fe Right-of-Way, Strawberry Creek Park and University Avenue. The following outlines one specific policy recommendation for the Santa Fe Right-of-Way from the Urban Design and Transportation Planning section:

The former railroad right-of-way that extends from Strawberry Creek Park along West Street should be developed as a continuous pedestrian and bicycle oriented greenway. Additionally, several vacant and under-utilized sites along the West Street right-of-way could be developed to create activities that would provide “eyes on the greenway” (landscaping, bike path, lighting, community gardens, tot-lots, basketball, day care, cafes, etc.). Renovation of the West Street right-of-way should incorporate restoration of Berkeley Way Park.¹

In addition, the Urban Design strategies call for streetscape enhancements that will improve safety and economic vitality. This can be done by using raised, paved, and painted crosswalks that are also usable for the disabled community. Human-scaled lighting and the use of open space plazas to encourage activity and security to the area are also outlined within the plan. The transportation policies specifically recommend the completion of the Bicycle Master Plan. Intersections for “bicycle friendly” streets and installation of racks and bike amenities are also encouraged.

¹ Calthorpe Associates, “University Avenue Strategic Plan”, Nov 1996

In analyzing the development of the Santa Fe Right-of-Way along University Avenue, public safety and traffic issues are key strategies for planning a successful greenway. The University Avenue Strategic Plan has considered these issues and integrated them into policy recommendations and strategies. By working with the Berkeley Police Department, neighbors and using traffic calming techniques, it suggests that a proposed greenway for this section can be a valuable asset to the area by connecting the north and south sides of Berkeley, and that a greenway along this section of University Avenue can also benefit the neighborhood shops along University Avenue by making it a more pedestrian-friendly area, which will contribute the neighborhood's economic vitality.

General Plan

The Berkeley General Plan is a set of goals, objectives, policies, and actions used to guide decision making in the development and preservation of Berkeley. It is also a statement of community priorities and values and will be used by the City Council, the Planning Commission, and the Zoning Adjustments Board when evaluating development proposals and projects, and making funding and budget decisions. The policies of the General Plan apply to all property, both public and private, within the Berkeley city limits.²

In evaluating alternatives for the Santa Fe Right-of-Way, we will look at specific relevant elements of the General Plan including Land Use, Open Space and Recreation, Housing, Economic Development and Citizen Participation.

Citizen Participation

The needs and priorities of the community are a major consideration in planning possible reuse alternatives for the right-of-way. The General Plan specifically states:

Whenever an area plan, a strategic plan, or any other land use planning is undertaken, there must be continuous and maximum participation by those who will be affected by the plan including committees of residents who live in or near the plan area, merchants, and others who do business in the plan area, as well as members of interested groups and the general public³.

Land Use

The Land Use Element contains a number of guidelines⁴ that should be considered when evaluating possible alternatives for reuse of the right-of-way. Re-Use of the right-of-way should preserve and protect Berkeley's quality of life and unique character. Re-use of the site should minimize traffic impacts on residential areas, be safe and attractive, and include effective citizen participation. Additionally, reuse of the right-of-way may ensure that neighborhoods are pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly and are well served by commercial districts, community services and centers, and facilities such as parks, schools, child-care facilities, health care, recreational programs, neighborhood resource centers, and religious institutions.

² <http://www.ci.berkeley.ca.us/planning/advance/generalplan/intro.html>

³ <http://www.ci.berkeley.ca.us/planning/advance/generalPlan/citizenParticipation.html>

⁴ <http://www.ci.berkeley.ca.us/planning/advance/generalPlan/landUse.html>

Open Space and Recreation

The Berkeley General Plan makes specific mention of the right-of-way in the Open Space and Recreation Element.

A community planning process to determine the final use of the remaining 14 blocks of City-owned land on the Santa Fe Right-of-Way shall consider public open space use (i.e., neighborhood parks, community gardens, and/or bicycle and pedestrian paths) as the highest priority use for the remaining vacant land and new affordable housing development as the next highest priority use⁵.

In keeping with Berkeley's inclination towards open space as the preferred reuse opportunity for the right-of-way, planners should identify and prioritize open space expansion opportunities in neighborhoods that are underserved or not easily accessible to existing park and recreational facilities. Specifically, reuse of the right-of-way could: increase the supply of neighborhood parks in Berkeley; increase the supply of playing fields for youth sports; establish spaces for art, music, and cultural activities; encourage and support community gardens as important open space resources that build communities and provide a local food source and the involvement of the community in growing and preparing their own food; or create a citywide pedestrian and bicycle network that links open space and recreation facilities with bicycle and walking paths along tree-lined streets, publicly owned pathways, creeks, and other greenways.

In considering these options, the maintenance and funding challenges of expanding Berkeley's open space and recreational facilities should be kept in mind. Each new facility adds to the cost of maintaining the overall parks and recreation system. A number of existing facilities are aging and need to be improved, repaired, or replaced. Additionally, some facilities need to be upgraded to meet new federal mandates establishing playground safety and ADA accessibility standards.

Housing⁶

After open space and recreation, affordable housing is considered the next highest priority use of the right-of-way. Re-use of the right-of-way should be consistent with the General Plan's housing element policies. Important principles are likely to include increasing the number of affordable housing units for Berkeley residents for moderate to low income residents as well as those persons with disabilities and the elderly. Ensuring that below-market-rate housing is distributed as evenly as possible throughout the community is also important, as well as contributing to the General Plan's goal of providing an additional 6,400 permanently affordable housing units for low and very low-income households through new construction.

Economic Development and Employment⁷

The Economic Development and Employment Element establishes policies for ensuring the long-term success of the Berkeley economy through city policies and programs. If economic development is a consideration, reuse of the right-of-way as

⁵ <http://www.ci.berkeley.ca.us/planning/advance/generalplan/openSpace.html>

⁶ <http://www.ci.berkeley.ca.us/planning/advance/generalplan/housing.html>

⁷ <http://www.ci.berkeley.ca.us/planning/advance/generalPlan/economicDevelopment.html>

commercial lots may provide a variety of jobs with varied skill levels for residents of Berkeley while supporting businesses that are independent, locally owned and environmentally sustainable. Re-use may also promote and increase social and economic equity in neighborhoods that have had historically higher-than-average rates of unemployment.

Bicycle Plan

As mentioned in the Open Space and Recreation Element of the General Plan, one way to increase recreation facilities in Berkeley is to establish a network of bicycle lanes and paths, physically separated from automobile traffic, that provide safe bicycle access to schools, recreation sites, and city open spaces.

The goal of the Berkeley Bicycle Plan is to make bicycling safer and more convenient for bicyclists of all ages and skill levels. The 1999 Bicycle Plan specifically mentions the Santa Fe Right-of-Way Path:

Building a bicycle path at the Santa Fe Right-of-Way would require right-of-way acquisition and might present problems at crossings of streets. Nevertheless, as it is one of the few opportunities for a grade-separated bicycle path in Berkeley, it should continue to be considered as a future project requiring further evaluation.

If a bicycle path, or other bikeway, is a consideration, reuse of the right-of-way should be consistent with Bicycle Plan policies including: the development of a safe, convenient, and continuous network that serves the needs of all types of bicyclists, pedestrians, the disabled community, and emergency response; serve all bicyclists' needs, especially for travel to employment centers, schools, commercial districts, transit stations, institutions, and recreational destinations; provide bikeway facilities that are safe and appropriate to traffic volume and speed; ensure that standards for roadway maintenance meet bicyclists' needs for smooth roads free of deterrents to bicycling (such as pot holes, debris, and overgrown landscaping) to the greatest extent possible; incorporate bicyclists' needs into the City's guidelines and timetables for maintenance activities, including repaving, and ensure proper funding levels for routine bicycle-related maintenance activities; and ensure that roadway and pedestrian corridor designs do not include any actions that would compromise bicycle safety, such as the extreme narrowing of a curb lane.

Bikeway Definitions

Bike paths (Class I), lanes (Class II), and routes (Class III) are the most commonly used bikeway types and are defined by Caltrans in the Highway Design Manual. Berkeley has designated two additional bikeway classifications: the Bicycle Boulevard and shared roadways (Class 2.5). The bikeway types are described below and should be evaluated for design and feasibility in determining an alternative reuse of the right-of-way.

- Bicycle Boulevard - A bicycle boulevard is a roadway designed to enhance bicyclists' safety and convenience. They are appropriate on local or low-volume

collector streets that do not serve as a transit or truck route and have very little commercial frontage.

- Bike Path (Class 1) - Provides a completely separated right of way for the exclusive use of bicycles and pedestrians with cross-traffic minimized.
- Bike Lanes (Class 2) - A striped lane on a roadway for the exclusive use of bicyclists (with certain regulated exceptions).
- Shared Roadways (Class 2.5) - Provides direct access and connections to major destinations.
- Bike Routes (Class 3) - A roadway that is signed as a bikeway because it provides continuity in the overall bikeway network or it identifies a route which is somehow preferable to immediately adjacent streets.

SITE ANALYSIS TEAM

Introduction

Physically, the Santa Fe right-of-way is a 3.1 mile strip of vacant land that starts from the corner of Russell and Sacramento Streets and runs northwest to the Albany border. There exist many different possibilities for redevelopment along the Santa Fe Right-of-Way. However, possible future uses of this land are faced with several challenges. The Santa Fe Right-of-Way is frequently transected by streets, interrupted by several housing developments and used by the surrounding neighbors. Furthermore, trash is abundant on the Santa Fe Right-of-Way. We found broken bottles, old bikes, trashed fences, sandbags and cement. In addition, the neighbors are concerned about crime, the speed of traffic along Dwight Way and University Avenue, and they are resistant to any type of change of the right-of way. Despite these constraints, the Santa Fe Right-of-Way is a unique opportunity for the City of Berkeley because it occupies some of the last remaining undeveloped greenspace within the city's boundaries.

The Site Analysis Team will provide detailed information on the current uses and conditions of the Santa Fe Right-of-Way. The first two sections will discuss the findings of the block-by-block field observation. The third section will give a detailed account of our use observation of the right-of-way. Finally, this section will conclude with the possibilities and constraints of the right-of-way. The information provided can be used by planners, architects, stakeholders and community groups to help guide future developments of the right-of-way.

Block-By-Block Observation of the Northern Portion

The northern section of the Santa Fe Right-of-Way extends from Strawberry Creek Park (between Addison Street and Allston Way) north to the Karl Linn Community Garden at the corner of Hopkins Street and Peralta Street. (Figure SA1) A bicycle and pedestrian path that are part of the Ohlone Greenway exist on the Santa Fe Right-of-Way from Cedar Rose Park to the Karl Linn Community Garden. The Santa Fe Right-of-Way is undeveloped from Addison Street to the intersection of West and Lincoln.

CURRENT CONDITIONS

NORTH PORTION OF SANTA FE RIGHT OF WAY

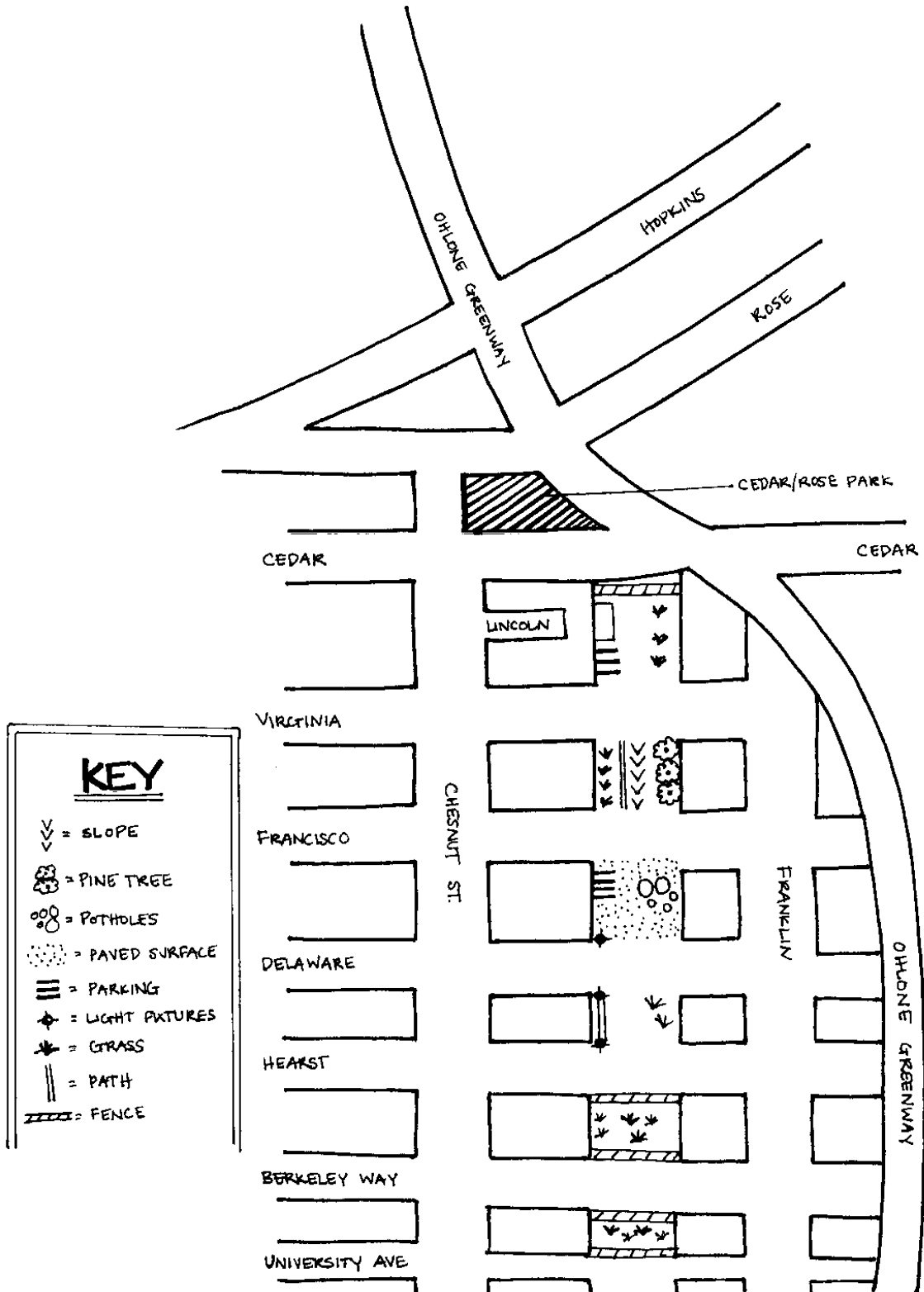


Figure SA1.

Addison Street to University Avenue

This portion of the Santa Fe Right-of-Way is home to the old Santa Fe railroad station, and will eventually be the location of the Berkeley Montessori School. The school has recently proposed that the city design a bike and pedestrian path alongside the new property, which they hope will encourage parents and teachers to use alternative modes of transportation when going to and from the school. This portion of the right-of-way consists almost entirely of asphalt, although a small patch on the western most corner of the site does have the remains of a row garden that was previously kept up by the Berkeley Youth Alternatives youth gardening program. It must also be mentioned that, University Avenue is a heavily trafficked four-lane road. As a result, there are significant noise constraints along the Santa Fe Right-of-Way bordering this street.

University Avenue to Berkeley Way

The portion of the Santa Fe Right-of-Way between University Ave. and Berkeley Way is currently bordered on the east by Gethsemane Church. The church has expressed interest in using the undeveloped portion of the Santa Fe Right-of-Way to the west of their building for an additional community outreach facility. This portion of the right-of-way has a chain link fence because of nearby neighbors' complaints about illegal and unsafe activity that has been reported in its general vicinity. However, there have been no recent crime reports to support these claims. This section of the right-of-way is about 50 feet wide, undeveloped and uninhabited, with annual grasses growing freely. In addition, there are two light posts on both ends and a small footpath that could potentially be used in the future if this section of the Santa Fe Right-of-Way is turned into a bicycle and pedestrian path.

Berkeley Way to Hearst Avenue

It was difficult for our team to observe this portion of the Santa Fe Right-of-Way in great detail because the city has requested that we avoid this section for fear of alarming the neighbors. For this reason, we refrained from gathering data on the stretch of the right-of-way that exists from University Avenue to Delaware. From a distance, however, we could see that it is unfenced and unused. Annual grasses were growing wildly, and there was no evidence of illegal occupation of this land by the adjacent neighbors. In addition, we found no evidence of illegal activity as the neighbors complained about.

Hearst Avenue to Delaware Street

At Hearst, the Santa Fe Right-of-Way is unfenced and covered with annual grasses growing wildly on the eastern side. There is a narrow paved path running along the western side that looks as though it has not been maintained. In addition, streetlights exist alongside the western side of the Santa Fe Right-of-Way, but it is unclear whether these are in functioning order. Neighbors on the eastern side of the right-of-way have chosen to fence off their property with a low metal padlock fence that allows some visibility into their home and backyard. The adjacent property on the eastern, as well as the western side has fenced off their property with a tall wooden fence that blocks all visibility from the right-of-way.

Delaware Street to Francisco Street

Conditions change on the Santa Fe Right-of-Way at Delaware because neighbors have chosen to use it as a makeshift parking lot. This portion of the right-of-way is unfenced and publicly accessible, and furthermore, there are no fences to demarcate where neighbors' backyards end and where the right-of-way begins. It is unclear from observation how neighbors have divided property lines along this portion of the Santa Fe Right-of-Way, but it is obvious that this section is frequently used. The surface is paved with mixed asphalt and gravel, and there are many potholes and puddles that may be caused by a lack of maintenance. There are apartment complexes on both sides of the right-of-way adjacent to Francisco Street, which may be one reason for the overflow parking. The property on the northernmost stretch has no visible property lines as well as no fencing protecting it from activity on the Santa Fe Right-of-Way. On the southwest portion, there is very little vegetation of the site despite the significant amount of sunlight. However, there are some annual grasses growing on the northeast stretch of the Santa Fe Right-of-Way, although much of it has somewhat deep ruts where it has been trampled by cars.



Northern Portion of the Santa Fe Right-of-Way on Delaware Street

Francisco Street to Virginia Street

The Santa Fe Right-of-Way narrows here to about 40 feet in width, and there is a significant increase in slope on the western side. Properties on the western side of the right-of-way are built approximately five to six feet higher than those on the eastern side. A small footpath runs up the middle of this portion, but it is currently unpaved and subject to water saturation during the peak of the rainy season. The vegetation is mostly comprised of annual grasses and three large adult Monterey Pine trees on the eastern side. This section is unfenced and currently unoccupied by cars. However, one of the neighbors on the eastern side built a fence along their property line that juts out triangularly onto the right-of-way to protect an unidentified object.

Virginia Street to Lincoln Street

The western side of portion of the right-of-way between Virginia and Lincoln is unfenced, and is currently being used for parking and outdoor storage by neighbors in the adjacent apartment complex. The property next to the apartment complex is a parking lot open to the right-of-way, and there are two old cars parked aimlessly on the lot that look as though they have been abandoned. It appears that the property next to the parking lot has built on about ten feet of the right-of-way and created a makeshift cactus garden. This stretch of the right-of-way is approximately 25 feet wide, and becomes fenced off once it hits Lincoln Avenue at the Ohlone Greenway.

Lincoln Street to Cedar Rose Park

At Lincoln, the Santa Fe Right-of-Way is fenced off, and pedestrians and bicyclists must travel down a steep path onto Lincoln, turn right onto Chestnut Street and then proceed right onto Cedar to rejoin the right-of-way. In addition, a tall metal chain linked fence blocks users from reaching the Ohlone Greenway.

This section of the Ohlone Greenway is heavily used, in part because it is the closest bike and pedestrian path to the North Berkeley BART Station. The property directly adjacent to the right-of-way and opposite the fence is a heavily used basketball court. The Greenway runs alongside this court, proceeds for about 50 yards until it hits Cedar Street. This section of the Ohlone Greenway is heavily vegetated with Monterey Pine trees that shade those using the path. It is also well lit for those using the greenway at night. The greenway continues north across Cedar Street to Cedar Rose Park, which is also heavily used by people of all ages. This space has some vegetation on the outer portions of the site, but it is mostly open lawn for sports and other recreational purposes. The Greenway proceeds along the northeast corner of the park, crosses Rose Street and continues northwest to Hopkins Street and the Karl Linn Community Garden.

Block-By-Block Observation of the Southern Portion

This section will look at the portion of the Santa Fe Right-of-Way that runs from Sacramento and Russell Streets to Strawberry Creek Park. The paper will outline the characteristics of the vacant land and will then use a map of the Southern part of the Santa Fe Right-of-Way to illustrate the existing conditions and uses of the vacant land. (Figure SA2)

CURRENT CONDITIONS
SOUTH PORTION OF SANTA FE RIGHT OF WAY

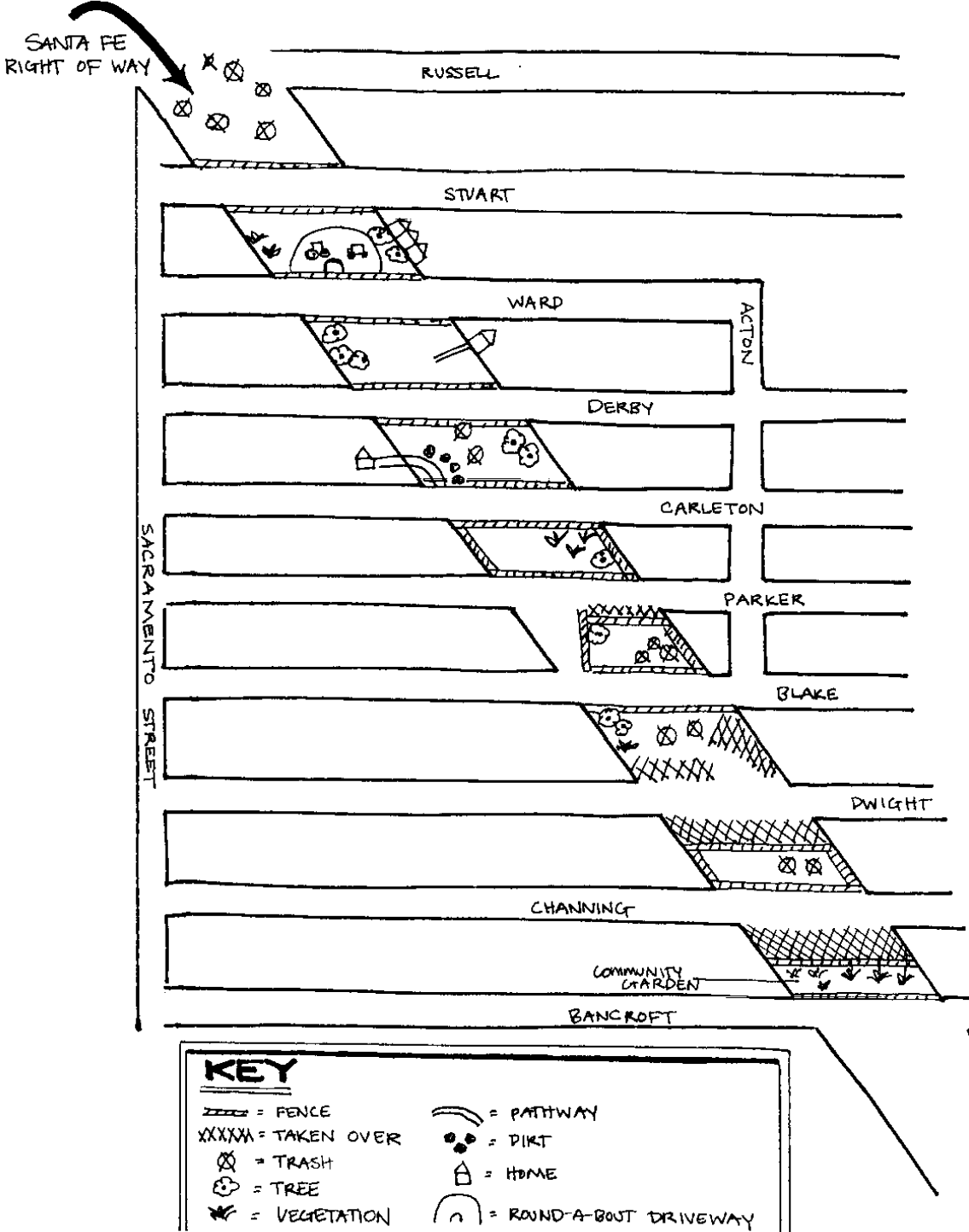


Figure SA2.

Russell Street to Ward Street

The portion of the right-of-way from Russell to Ward is mainly a strip of vacant land that is blocked off by chain-link fences to prohibit trespassing. The grass on the right-of-way from Stuart to Ward appears to be mowed fairly frequently. In addition, there are large patches of ivy on the eastern side. On the western side of the Santa Fe Right-of-Way on the surrounding neighbors' property there are two large pine trees. At Ward Street, the City of Berkeley allowed the development of a cul-de-sac on the right-of-way that is surrounded by several affordable housing duplexes and triplexes. Approximately fifteen parking spaces line the cul-de-sac and one make-shift basketball net exists on the paved property.



Sojourner Truth Cul-de-sac

Ward Street to Derby Street

From Ward to Derby, the grass on the Santa Fe Right-of-Way had not been mowed when we observed it in early March. Several abandoned telephone poles exist on this block along with several piles of cement that were disposed of on the lot. In addition, a neighbor on the western side of the right-of-way uses the vacant land as a play area for their children. This Santa Fe Right-of-Way is fenced off from trespassers, with the exception of some neighbors who have access to the land from their back doors.

Derby Street to Parker Street

The block from Derby to Carleton is unfenced, but the block from Carleton to Parker is once again gated off. Between Derby and Carleton, there is a drainage ditch on the western side along with several old sandbags and two large pine trees. On the northern side, one neighbor has paved a section of the right-of-way and developed a driveway and parking for his house. From Carleton to Parker, a rough foot path exists in the middle of the right-of-way, and one large pine tree (at least three feet around) and several large shrubs are also planted on the western side of the vacant land.



Driveway Off of Parker Street on the Santa Fe Right-of-Way

Parker Street to Dwight Way

On the corner of Parker and Acton Streets, the neighbors, either legally or illegally, have built a large gate and fence over part of the Santa Fe Right-of-Way. Several large piles of trash composed of old bicycles, broken toilets and car seats are piled along the corner of Blake and Acton. In addition, the right-of-way fence goes around a large and well-developed pine tree in between the blocks of Parker and Blake. Between Blake and Dwight, on the south side, the right-of-way's width narrows to about 20 feet, likely to due the surrounding neighbor encroaching on the vacant land. On Dwight Way, the city allowed the development of a duplex housing structure on the Santa Fe Right-of-Way.

Dwight Way to Channing Way

To the north of Dwight Way on the strip of the Santa Fe Right-of-Way that runs between Dwight and Channing Way, the city constructed another housing development. Behind the housing development, the right-of-way is vacant and gated off by large fences, but this section in particular had a lot of debris and trash on it. A new fence was constructed on the eastern side, but the trash from the old fence still lies on the vacant piece of land. We also found several bottles of alcohol on this block of land.

Channing Way to Bancroft Way

In between Channing Way and Poe Street the city allowed the development of several units of cooperative housing on the Santa Fe Right-of-Way that are aesthetically pleasing and well kept. From Poe Street to Bancroft Avenue, Berkeley Youth Alternatives runs a successful community garden that seems to be well maintained.



Cooperative Housing on Poe Street

Use Observation

The use observation occurred on Thursday, February 27th from 2-4 PM and on Saturday, March 1st from 10-1PM. The site analysis group separated into teams of two for our use observations. One team walked around the northern portion of the Santa Fe Right-of-Way, looking for activity on the streets and in the community gardens. Another group observed Strawberry Creek Park and Cedar Rose Park, looking for people playing on the courts, walking their dogs, basking in the sun or meeting with friends. The third group observed the southern portion of the Santa Fe Right-of-Way, looking for current uses on the vacant land and the activity of the surrounding neighbors. Each team found different results; the level of activity along the Santa Fe Right-of-Way varies greatly from one portion to another.

Strawberry Creek Park

Strawberry Creek Park, narrowly stretched and tucked just south of University Avenue, offers the most diverse land use along the right-of-way. In the park, joggers and bicyclists can be seen trotting through the narrow pathways and along the strips of greenery. On a typical weekend, the most frequent users tended to be a handful (3-5) dog owners going for a walk, (5-10) people attending yoga classes just adjacent to the right-of-way, bicyclists and joggers, and people seeking a place in the sun to lay and rest. The children's playground in the central section of the park rarely has more than a handful of users. We took notice of only a few users in the portion of the park that was covered in shade and located adjacent to the Berkeley Youth Alternatives building. It must be noted however that we took these observations in late February and into early March, and so the lighting and weather conditions could vary greatly from when we observed the area. On one weekend, toward the south end of the park, the basketball courts were frequented by fifteen players all playing one full court game, with ten on the court, and five watching and waiting to play next. A few sparse benches along the courts and park were used, primarily those that receive adequate sunlight. Two picnickers were spotted reading a

paper and just taking in the sun. One area of the park that appears to be underused is the volleyball court and indoor soccer arena just north of Bancroft at the south end of the park. These courts apparently are used infrequently possibly due to the lack of visibility from the street and a lack of parking, but the courts underutilization could also be due to a lack of interest in those particular sports (i.e. soccer and volleyball) by the residents in this particular area along the right-of-way. We did notice graffiti on the courts and empty beer bottles lining the surrounding area giving clear signs to vandalism and alcohol consumption in this area. We preliminarily attribute the vandalism occurring here to the narrow features of this park that provide for a sense of seclusion and low visibility from the street and other areas of the park.

Northern Unplanned Section of Santa Fe Right-of-Way

From Hearst through Cedar Rose Park along Cedar Street, the main signs of usage along this section seem to be parking and driveway access. Apartment buildings built adjacent to the right-of-way have incorporated parking that encroaches on the right-of-way space. Tire tread marks, engine oil, and even a few parked cars indicate the space is primarily used for parking and drive way space. No pertinent activities were spotted along this stretch. We did notice some residents, however, moving to and from their vehicles, possibly carrying groceries and attending to other household chores.

Cedar Rose Park

Cedar Rose Park features the largest open green space along the right-of-way. This park has a large open playing field that is highly visible from both Cedar and Rose Street. The appearance of openness provides an inviting area for parents to bring their children to play in one of the two playgrounds or in the open grass. The playgrounds here, as opposed to at Strawberry Creek Park, featured the sounds of as many as two dozen children playing at any given time. Parents lined the playgrounds watching their kids, while young adults and older children play in the main field of the park. Park benches here receive plenty of sunlight and serve as an inviting place for picnickers to relax and enjoy the day. Bicyclists and joggers once again made their daily traverses along the pathway located at the edge of the park. Just across Rose Street, a narrow line of tennis courts was in use much more frequently than those at Strawberry Creek Park. Again, the visibility from the street and neighborhood serves as one indicator of why this park has a consistently higher volume of users.

Possibilities and Constraints

By synthesizing the block-by-block observations and the use observations, we were able to determine several possibilities for redevelopment along the Santa Fe Right-of-Way. The opportunities for redevelopment are community gardens and community orchards, recreational parks, bicycle and pedestrian paths, and housing.

Community Gardens and Orchards

One possibility for development on the Santa Fe Right-of-Way could be community gardens or community orchards. These developments will create an opportunity for residents to learn about horticultural therapy techniques, job training, food production, and will also create opportunities for economic development in the area.

However, for this to be successful neighborhoods must be dedicated to maintaining the site and financial resources need to be secured. Because the site was previously occupied by the Santa Fe Railway, specific measure should also be taken to ensure that the soil is not contaminated.

Recreational Parks

Parks are another possibility for development on the site because they provide recreational opportunities for the community. The city can develop a variety of parks, such as: dog parks, tot parks, and recreational parks. These parks will provide surrounding neighbors with recreational opportunities and will enhance the beauty and quality of life throughout Berkeley. The constraints for this type of development are similar to those of the community gardens and orchards. The city must secure financial resources for the development and maintenance of these parks. Furthermore, the city needs to ensure that the parks are designed in such a way that high visibility will prevent loitering and criminal activity on the site and in the surrounding area.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Paths

In addition, it may be beneficial to the community to provide bicycle and pedestrian access through all feasible portions of the Santa Fe Right-of-Way. There are already existing bicycle routes within close proximity to the right-of-way, and this provides an important opportunity for increasing bicycle safety and mobility within the area. However, some parts of the site are heavily trafficked and may be unsafe for pedestrian and bicycle crossing. The city can alleviate this problem by creating well designated and well lit crosswalks with bulb-outs to increase and improve pedestrian and bicycle safety.

Housing

Finally, opportunities for affordable and market rate housing exists on specific portions of the Santa Fe Right-of-Way. Currently, Berkeley faces a housing shortage and it may be beneficial for the city to consider building single-family or multi-family units on the site. However, many neighbors near the site have expressed concerns about this option because they are worried about increases in criminal activity, parking availability and about preserving the last section of open space within the city.

SURVEY TEAM

The survey team conducted field research to gather information on public opinion regarding the future land use possibilities for the Santa Fe Right-of-Way area (abbreviated in the survey as SFROW). We chose to administer the survey to people living in neighborhoods immediately adjacent to the right-of-way (see Figure SU1 at the end of this section). The goal of the survey was to determine the neighbors' opinions about community issues and their concerns about potential development of the right-of-way. We conducted the survey on the following dates: Tuesday, February 25th from 2:00 to 5:00 PM; Saturday, March 1st from 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM; Saturday, March 8th from 2:00 to 4:30 PM; and Wednesday, March 12th from 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM. We chose to collect the data using door-to-door interview techniques rather than using mail surveys in order to increase the response rate and to expedite the overall time frame of the survey process.

Creating the Survey

In order to create appropriate questions, we made a list of the pertinent information that we wanted to obtain from the respondents. We attempted to design the questions in a format which would illicit valuable responses concerning specific topics which we could then evaluate. We chose open-ended questions about the neighborhood challenges, advantages, and safety issues in order to receive honest answers from the respondents, so that they would not be influenced by any choices we presented. We chose ranking questions for the type of parks and potential development desired in order to learn what interested the respondents the most, while providing specific alternatives which they might not have thought on their own. We chose simple "yes/no" questions for basic information that did not require further elaboration.

The final draft of the survey included twenty-three questions to determine what the respondents thought of their neighborhood and the Santa Fe Right-of-Way, and to describe their activities which could influence the future land usage of the right-of-way. In addition to the survey, we created a cover letter to distribute to the residents that explained the survey process. The cover letter also ensured the respondents that the survey was strictly for information gathering purposes, and the survey did not imply that the city would be undertaking any particular actions regarding future development along the right-of-way. We included a map of the right-of-way area on the back of the cover letter for reference.

Conducting the Survey

We introduced ourselves as UC Berkeley students and explained that we were collecting information for our City and Regional Planning class. We gave each respondent the cover letter and map of the Santa Fe Right-of-Way area. We administered the survey to the houses within one block east and west of the right-of-way. We avoided areas where the right-of-way which had already been developed, such as Strawberry Creek Park, since the city was not interested in further development of those areas. We also avoided the areas where the neighbors were adamantly opposed to any development of the right-of-way, such as the section around University Ave. We primarily surveyed the neighbors along the right-of-way south of Channing Ave, which we labeled "South"

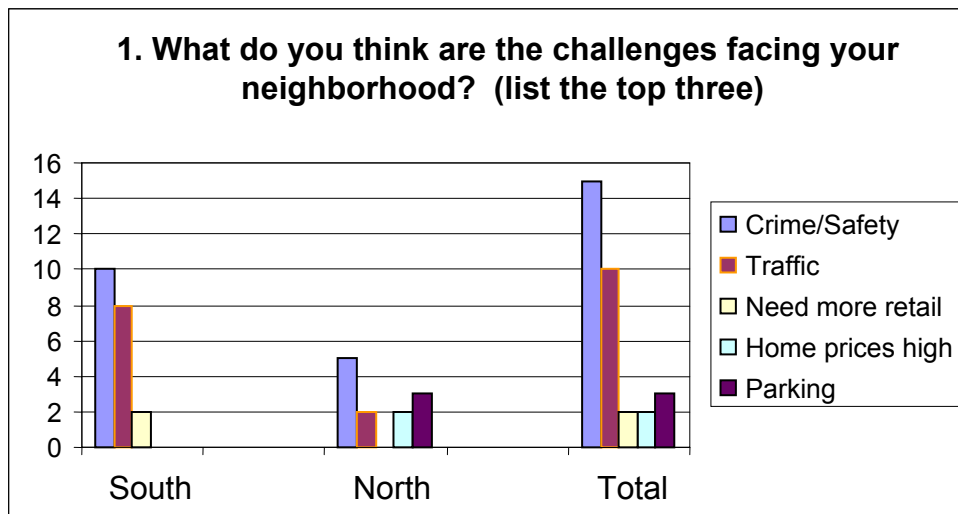
on our survey results, and the neighbors north of Delaware, which we labeled “North” on our survey results.

Challenges of Conducting the Survey

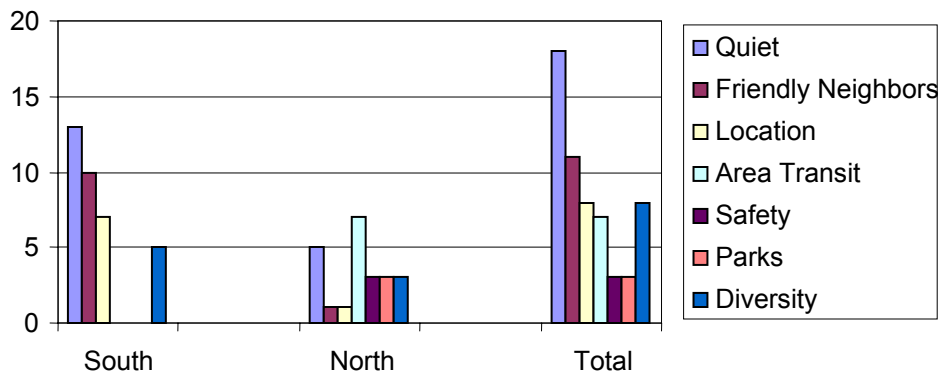
While conducting the survey, we experienced some difficulty with a few of the questions with regards to how the question was worded. Some of the respondents had difficulty answering open-ended questions. In addition, many respondents were confused about the difference in the question concerning affordable housing, when they were asked if they wanted affordable housing on the portion of the right-of-way near their homes or on other portions of the right-of-way. Many respondents expressed confusion over the difference between the portion of the right-of-way near their homes and the other portions of the right-of-way, despite the presence of the provided map. Another question in which there was much confusion was the wording of the question concerning dog-walking areas. Many respondents who did not own dogs were confused over how to answer this question. In addition, there was a problem concerning the question involving the use of neighborhood parks. One respondent expressed his concern over the question, in that he felt he had no parks in his immediate neighborhood.

In addition to the problems we had with the question wording of the survey, we also had problems administering the survey. We had a very low response rate. Many respondents were not home the four times we attempted to administer the survey. In addition, many respondents did not want to take the time to answer the survey questions. After spending four days administering the survey, we received only thirty-seven responses. However, those who were home and willing to answer the survey questions provided very valuable information. Many expressed interest in the development of the right-of-way, and had several different ideas of what they wanted in their neighborhood.

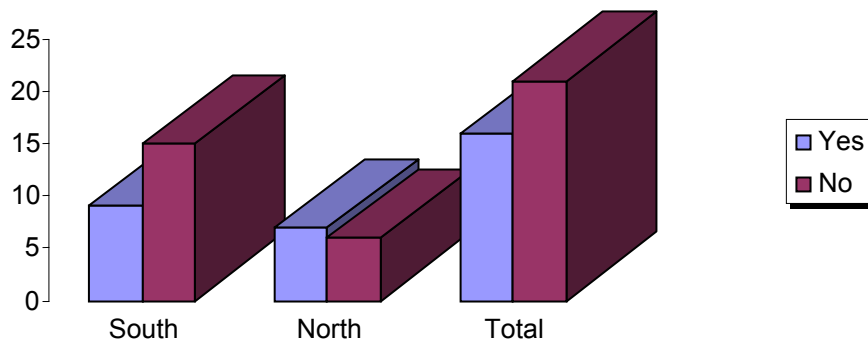
Survey Data



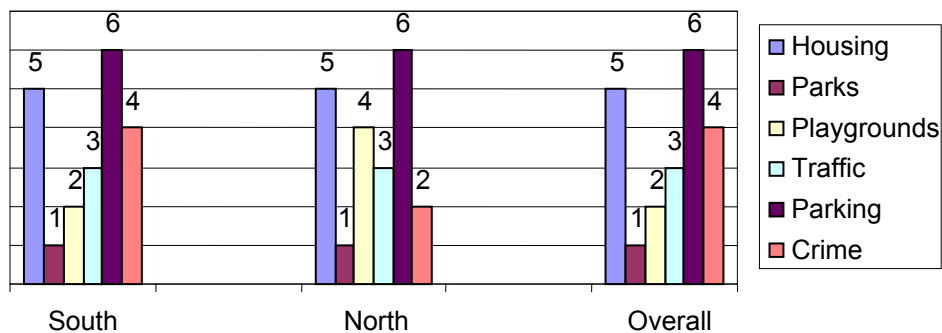
2. What do you think are the advantages of your neighborhood? (list the top three)



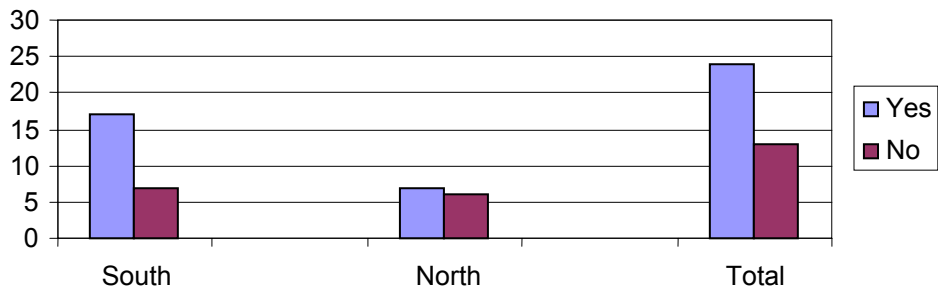
3. Do you feel that there are any safety issues in your neighborhood?



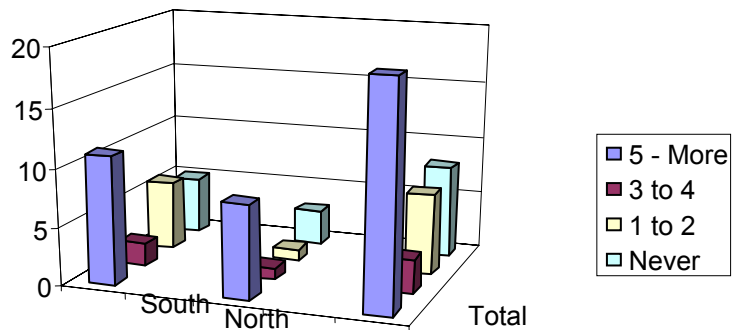
4. Please rank the following as to their importance for your neighborhood (rank 1 for most important through 6 for least important):



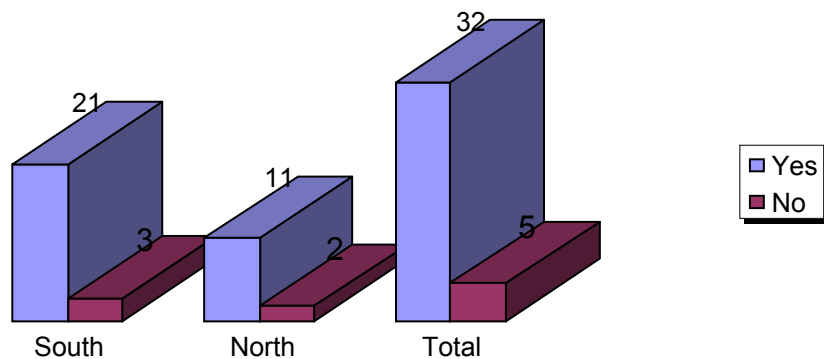
5. Do you think that property owners immediately adjacent to the SFROW should be allowed to purchase abutting sections of the land for their own personal use?

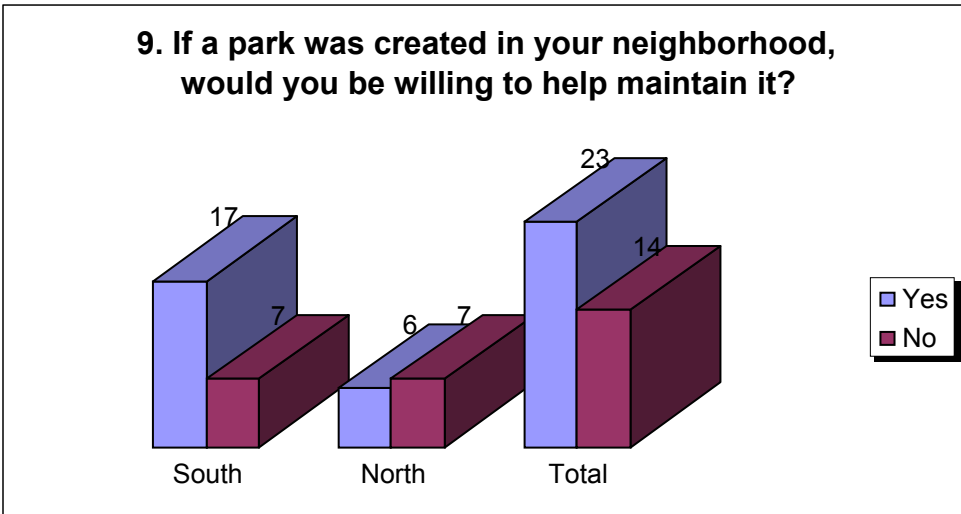
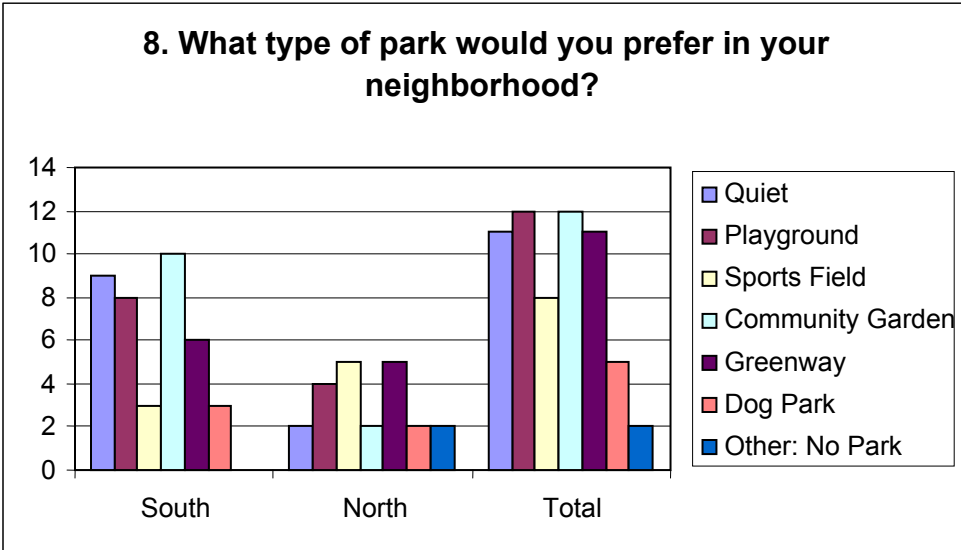
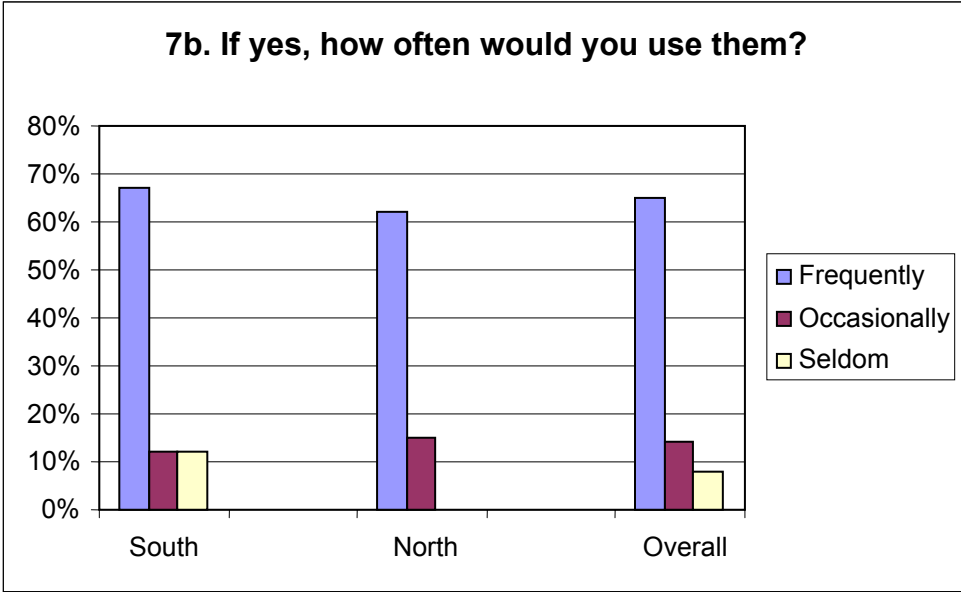


6. How many times per month do you use available parks in your neighborhood?

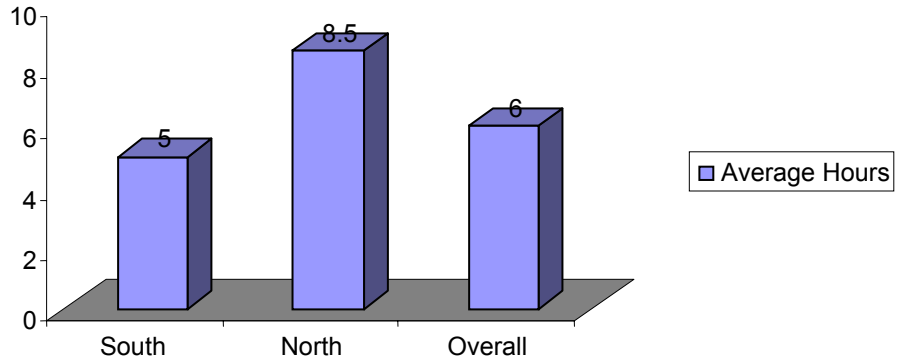


7. If Berkeley developed parks in your neighborhood, would you use them?

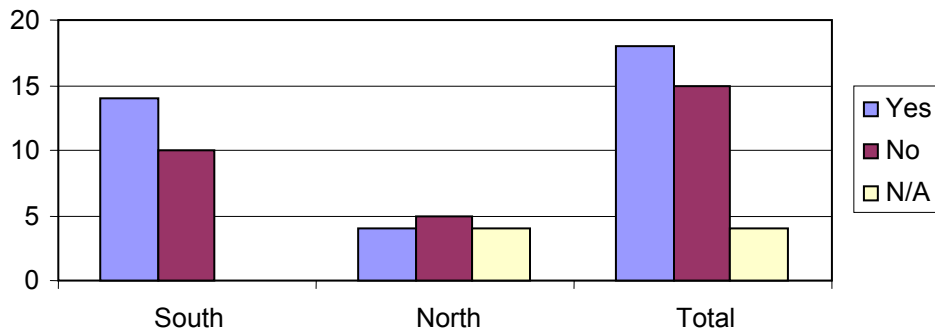




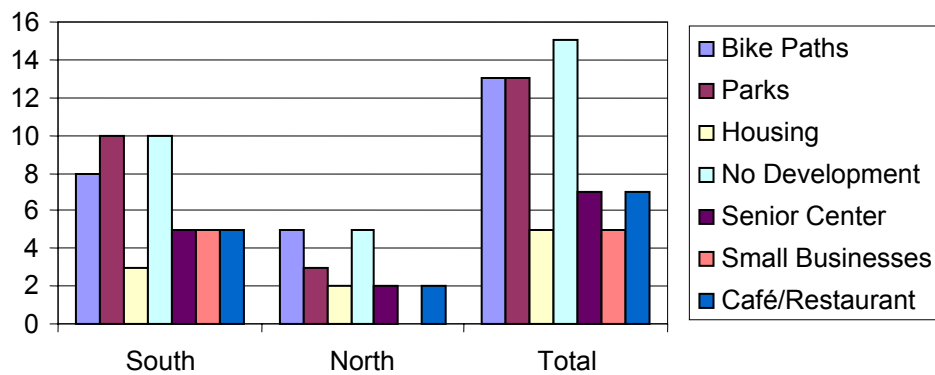
9b. If yes, approximately how many hours per month could you contribute?



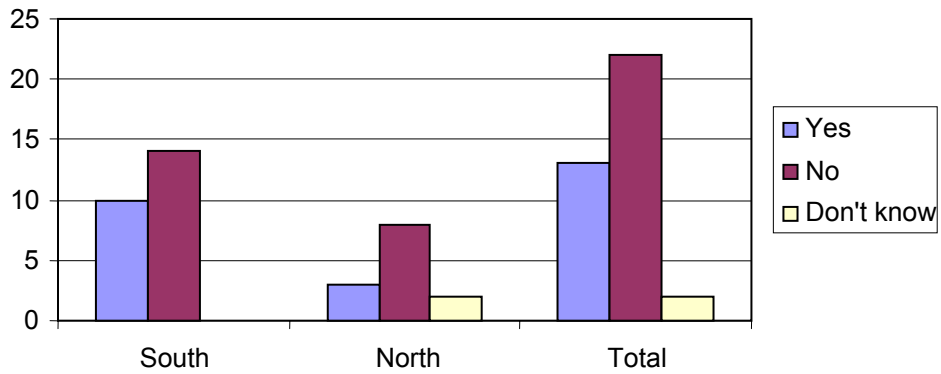
10. Would you be willing to pay more taxes for land acquisition and maintenance in order to create a park on the SFROW?



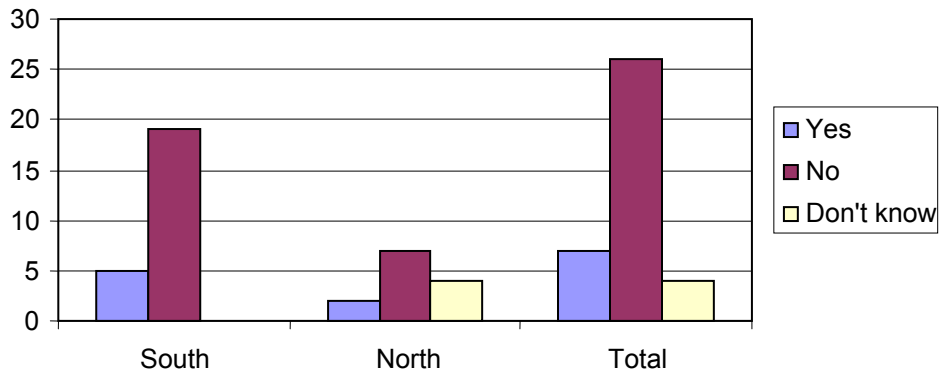
11. What additional features would you like to see in your neighborhood?



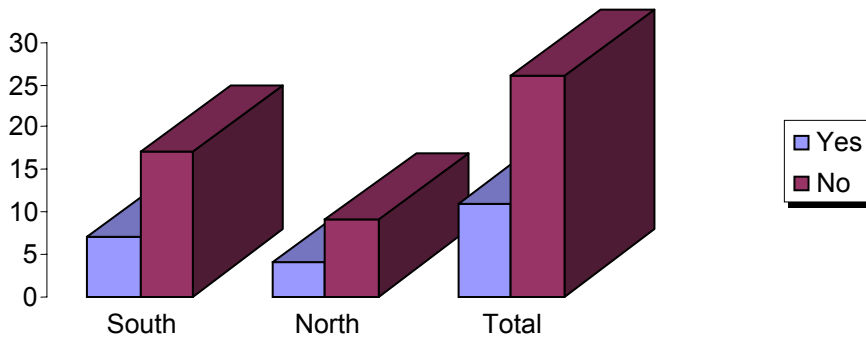
12. Should the city build affordable housing on some portions of the SFROW?



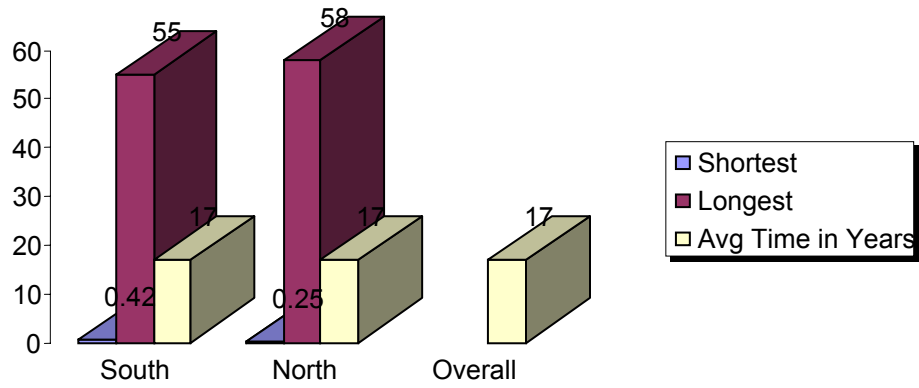
12b. Should the city build affordable housing on the SFROW lot in your neighborhood?



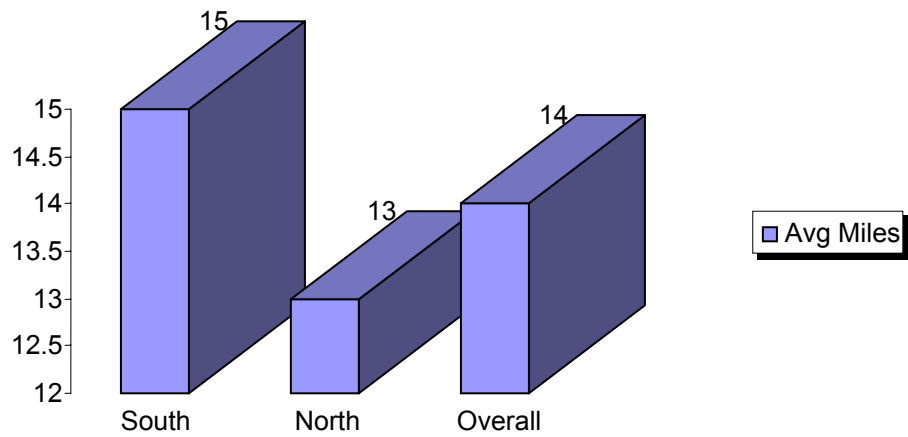
13. Are you involved in any community organizations?



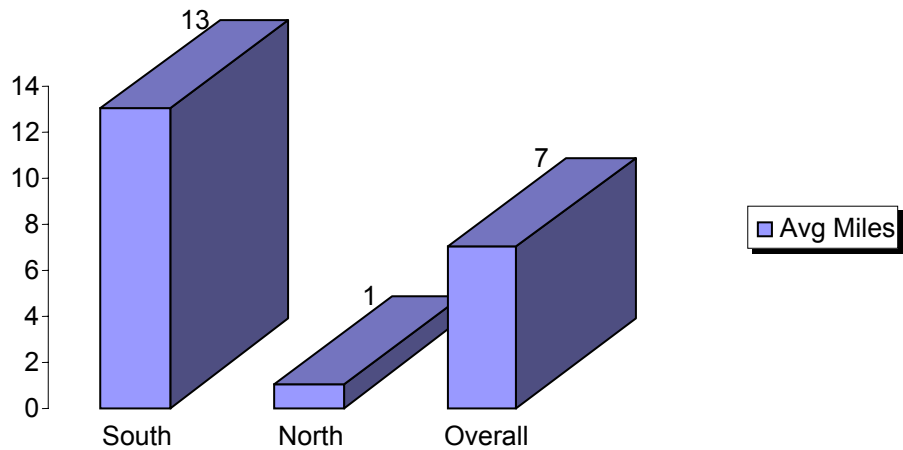
14. How long have you lived in this neighborhood?



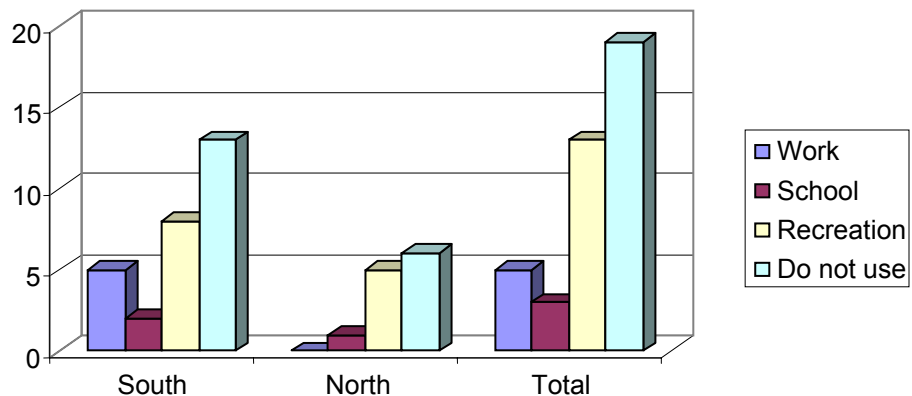
15. How far do you commute to work?



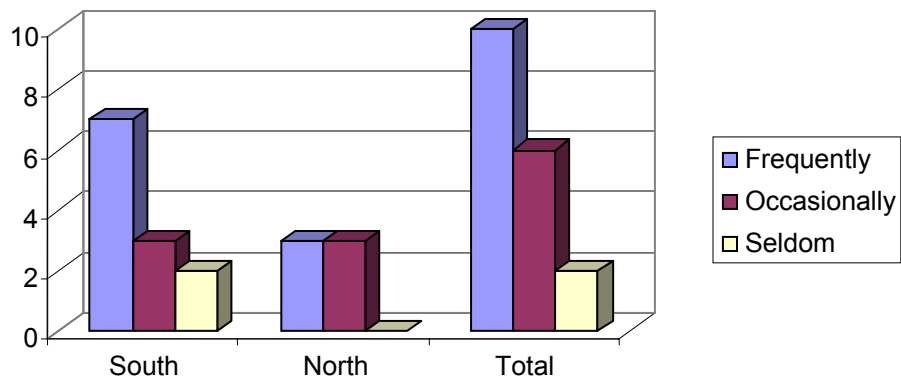
15b. How far do you commute to school?



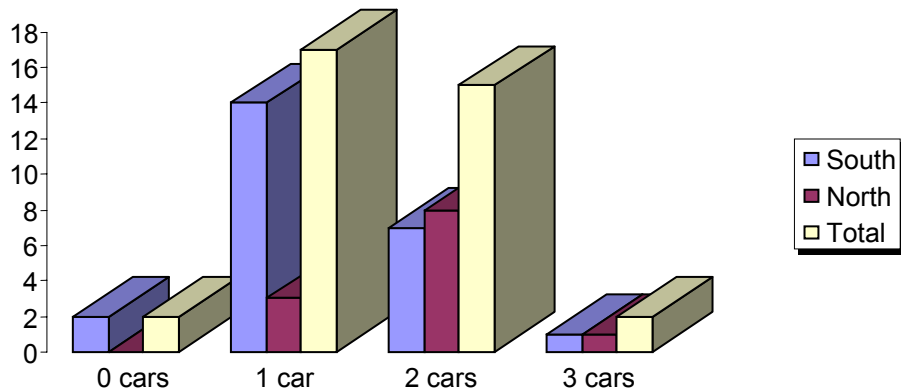
16. Do you use a bicycle?



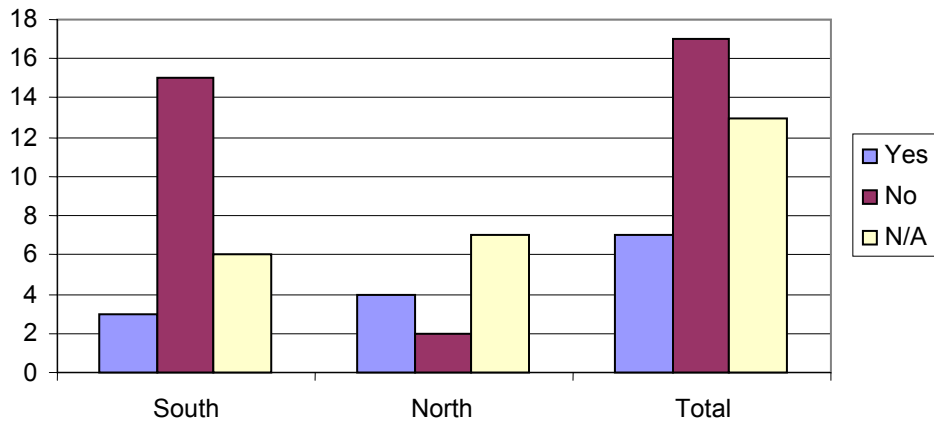
16b. If you use a bicycle for any reason, how often do you do so?



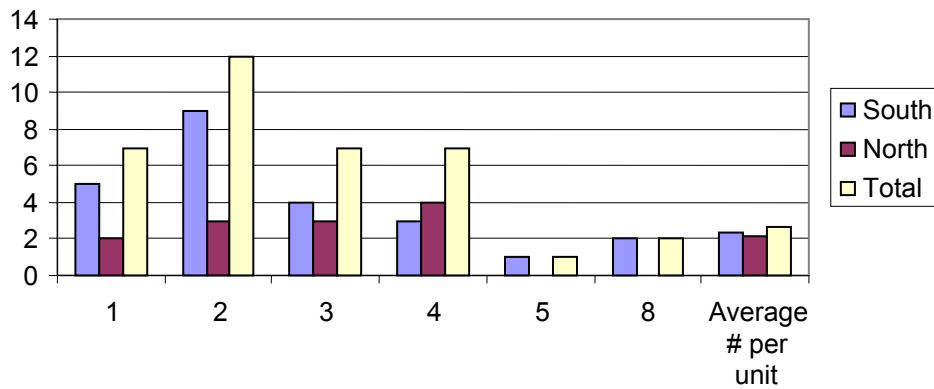
17. How many cars in your household?



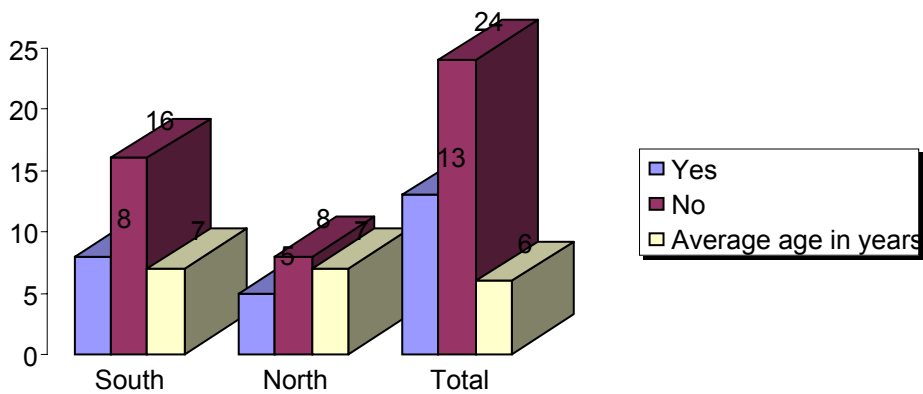
18. If you have a dog, do you feel that your neighborhood has adequate dog-walking areas?

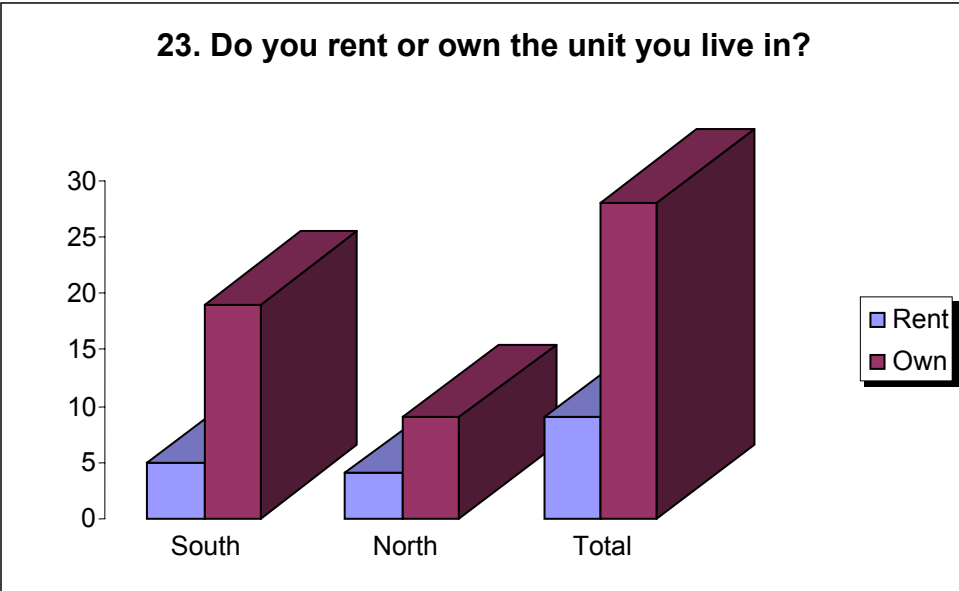
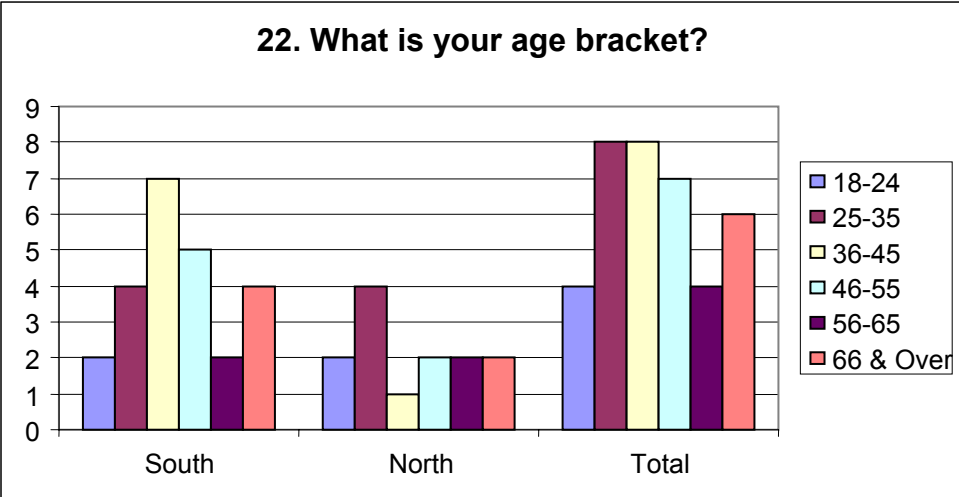
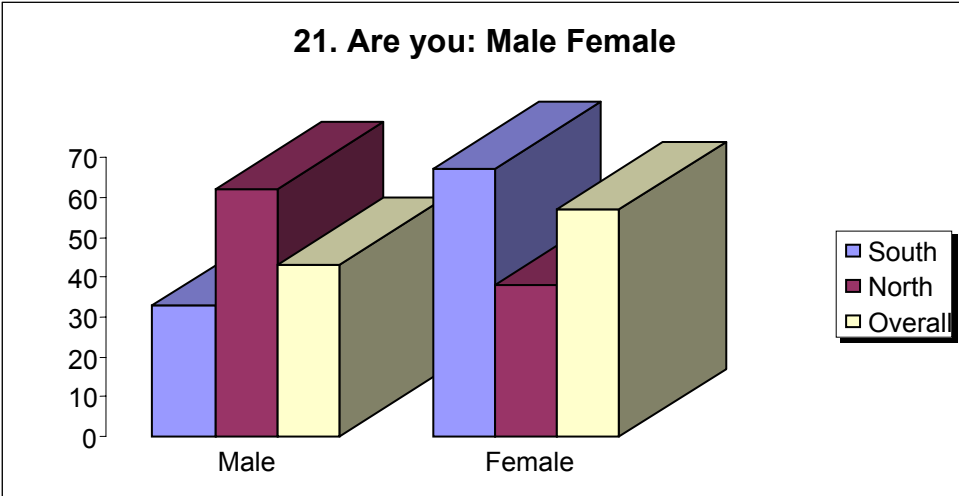


19. How many people are living in your household?



20. Do you have any children? If yes, average age:





Survey Results

To analyze the results of the surveys, we organized the data by number of responses from the North and South and also a Total (North and South). Some questions were then converted to percentages or ranked. The key questions on the survey were challenges and advantages of the respective neighborhoods, the neighborhood needs, the type of park desired, willingness to pay more taxes for parks, willingness to maintain parks, and desire for affordable housing.

As challenges facing the neighborhood, crime was mentioned the most, followed by traffic concerns. However, the first and second largest advantages were the quietness and friendliness of the area. These do not seem like qualities a neighborhood would have if crime were actually a problem. Another question followed asking about safety issues, where 57% of people surveyed responded that no safety issues existed. In the next question, people were asked to rank a series of issues according to importance. Crime was fourth out of the six choices, with 1 as most important and 6 as least important. Traffic concerns came in at third and sixth place. Additional parks were of primary importance to the majority of people, followed by more playgrounds.

In response to the number of times people used parks, 51% used parks 5 or more times per month, and 86% said if Berkeley developed parks, they would use them frequently. It is difficult to determine the type of park that would best fit each area because the responses were fairly evenly spread. 20% of people preferred a community garden or a playground. 18% of people preferred a quiet park for relaxation or a pedestrian/ bicycle greenway. One respondent requested just planting rows of oak trees along the right-of-way, while another suggested a skate park.

62% of people said they would be willing to help maintain a neighborhood park, if one was created. Of that 62%, an average of 6 hours/month would be donated per person. If hours were donated, 83% of these respondents said they would use new parks frequently.

Out of the 13 surveys of people who had children, 10 of these people were willing to donate hours. Out of the surveys who responded as having children, playgrounds were most preferred (56%) followed by adult sports fields (31%), with the average age of children being 6 years.

Surprisingly, 49% of people were willing to pay more taxes for the purchase and maintenance of parkland. The question on neighborhood needs reflects this desire, where 20% of people wanted to see more parks and 20% wanted a bicycle/pedestrian path. 23% were opposed to development in general. The majority of people (59% and 70%, respectively) felt that no affordable housing should be built on any of the right-of-way, or on the portion in their neighborhood.

We found that 47% of people surveyed do not use a bicycle. Only 20% use a bicycle to commute to work or school- the remaining 33% use bicycles for recreation. If a bicycle was used, the type of park preferred was a playground (23%), a bicycle/pedestrian greenway (23%), or a community garden (21%).

24 respondents owned dogs, and 71% of these were dissatisfied with the available dog-walking areas. However, only 8% of people preferred a dog park in their neighborhood (5 out of 17 were dissatisfied people).

The survey respondents were demographically spread out. Approximately half were males and half were females. The mean age fell in the range of 35 to 45 years old,

though it was spread fairly evenly between 18 and 66-over. Only 9 out of the 37 people interviewed rented their home, but these respondents were just as willing and interested in the future of the neighborhood as the 28 homeowners.

Survey Key Points

The results that are important to point out from a planning sense is that though crime and safety were recorded as the greatest challenges to the area along the right-of-way, and the quiet, friendly atmosphere of each neighborhood was the greatest advantage. People felt their neighborhood either needed more parks or a greenway, or no development at all. Some people were willing to pay more taxes for park acquisition and maintenance, and also willing to maintain parks themselves. The majority of people did not desire affordable housing along the right-of-way. Community gardens, playgrounds, greenways, and quiet/relaxing parks were the most desired park types. Since only thirty-seven people were surveyed, these results cannot adequately represent the entire population contiguous to the right-of-way. More results are needed in order to conduct a more thorough evaluation to determine clear and definite patterns with regards to the desires and needs of the community.

Survey Map

Shaded plots indicate locations where we conducted the survey. The line represents the right-of-way.



Figure SU1.

STAKEHOLDER TEAM

Berkeley is a city that contains many conscientious groups and communities of people heavily involved in improving the city for present users and generations to come. In our study of stakeholder groups, we included city departments, housing interest groups, religious organizations, a local school, bicycle friendly groups, senior citizens, transportation groups, parks advocates, garden groups, and environmental interest groups.

We initially prepared a list of potential stakeholders, dividing the list up into categories by type of interests, with each group member taking the responsibility to research, contact, and interview a select list. The whole interview process took approximately 4-5 weeks using a combination of face to face and phone interviews. Some groups were more difficult than others were; those that were non-profit didn't necessarily have people working everyday to get back to us.

Interview Format

We let all participants know that any information recorded during the interview may be compiled into a report to be shared with the City of Berkeley at a later date. Questions asked of the interviewee depended on a case by case basis. We encouraged participants to share any other feelings or information they had with us. Some of the main questions asked of all stakeholders were:

1. Do you have any suggestions for the future reuse of the right-of-way? If so, what are they?
2. How will a greenway affect your interests?
3. Can you identify other stakeholders? If so who are they?
4. What are your major concerns regarding use of the right-of-way? Do you have and suggestions on how to reconcile future uses with neighbors?

Important stakeholders in each category were targeted and chosen from an initial list according to their availability for interviews, willingness to participate and their past experience with the Santa Fe Right-of-Way. After contacting some groups, it was clear that they didn't have much of a vested interest in the design plans, so we removed them from our final list.

Housing Groups

Ecocity Builders

Richard Register and Kirsten Miller, Program Directors

Ecocity Builders build model projects that shift development from sprawl to compact pedestrian centers while avoiding auto-dependent areas. They plant urban street orchards and restores creeks; they are also working on redesigning downtown Berkeley to bring back Strawberry Creek, create a plazas, pedestrian streets and terraced housing with solar greenhouses in the Center Street / Shattuck area. The firm recently published *Village Wisdom / Future Cities*, a book about the Third International Ecocity Conference held in Senegal, Africa and also helped organize the Fourth International Ecocity Conference in Brazil. Speakers are available on ecological city planning, design, and activism.

Ecocity Builders are currently engaged in several creek restoration projects. Richard Register, an urban ecologist and the founder of Ecocity Builders, asked me to contact Kirsten Miller, his colleague, by phone.

Kirsten Miller advocates for more open space and no housing on the right-of-way. She wants more greenways, bike paths and community gardens in the area. Since she is also an advocate of affordable housing, she suggested that instead of filling the southern section of the right-of-way with affordable housing, it should be relocated to the city center. At the same time, she believes that all affordable housing should not be clustered together in the same spot. When asked if she would consider using the entire length of the right-of-way as a greenway she said no because the affordable housing already built cannot be relocated. The existence of the recent affordable housing projects off of Dwight Way and other southern sections would prevent a continuous greenway.

**City of Berkeley, Housing Department
Stephen Barton, Director of Housing Department**

The City of Berkeley's Housing Department preserves and supports affordable housing for Berkeley residents, paying special attention to the needs of the homeless, disabled, those with special needs and senior citizens. The department sponsors housing development and redevelopment programs, enforces Berkeley housing code in housing units and provides subsidized housing through the Section 8 program. The Housing Department is an umbrella organization, which also staffs the Housing Advisory Commission, the Council Subcommittee on Housing, the Human Welfare and Community Action Commission, and the Energy Commission.

At the City of Berkeley's offices, we spoke with Stephen Barton, the Director of Housing for the City of Berkeley. He is in favor of the greenway and does not advocate housing on the greenway because he is aware of the neighborhood and community opposition he would face. If he were to consider affordable housing in any of the areas, it would be towards the south side of the greenway where affordable housing already exists. But even those units, he says, were very controversial developments and are still opposed by the community in general.

The large parcels near the southern end of the right-of-way are surrounded by many low income housing projects and if any additional affordable housing were to be created on the right-of-way, it should be low to moderate density. In general he feels that the community wants a pathway through the right-of-way.

Economic Development Interests

**City of Berkeley, Economic Development Department
Dave Fogerty and Apurba Chatterjee**

The HIP grant was created incentivize cities to build transit-oriented development. Money is awarded for transportation and housing projects to promote this. A one million dollar grant was awarded to the City of Berkeley, but has not been received yet. The funds will be used for a greenway along the Santa Fe Right-of-Way, north of University Avenue to Delaware St. A copy of the Request for Qualifications Document was distributed in class and stressed a time line for the project which is September 2003.

Dave Fogerty is in favor of a greenway including a bicycle trail and a pedestrian pathway. However, he is not in favor of a fenced off greenway but if safety concerns of the residents around the area were taken into consideration, the trail will have to be fenced off during the evening and through the night. He stressed that the police department does not seem to have any records of drug related criminal activity in the area but such measures are imperative to keep neighbors satisfied.

Religious Groups

Although the Gethsemane church has a proposal for its neighboring lot to be developed into a community outreach center, the Gethsemane church and its immediate neighborhood were not contacted because residents of the area are concerned that crime will be reintroduced into their area with the development of a right-of-way. The residents are concerned that a greenway will act as a connector to the Berkeley Way Mini Park which is rumored to house heroine addicts and dealers. The legitimacy of these claims can be questioned because no police reports of any such activity exist. These residents have congregated to form the Santa Fe Right-of-Way Neighbors association and actively participate in any ongoing talks for a possible greenway.

Netivot Shalom Synagogue Joe Marisman, Director

The Netivot Shalom Synagogue will be built near the corner of Bonar and University streets, replacing the old Jay Vee Liquor store. Joe Marisman, one of the directors of the Netivot Shalom congregation supports a greenway from one block south of University Ave at Strawberry Creek Park, through North Berkeley. Marisman says:

“Most of the congregation’s members live in North Berkeley and one block south of University. A significant amount chooses to walk to the religious campus and therefore we support a greenway which would facilitate them with a direct pathway to the synagogue.”

Marisman has no opinion about developing the southern section of the right-of-way into a greenway because most of the congregation’s members live up north. In the past, Marisman participated in various community meetings with neighborhood associations such as the Berkeley Way Neighborhood Association, The University Avenue Business Association, and members of the Strawberry Creek Lodge.

Senior Citizens Homes and Organizations

The Strawberry Creek Lodge Lois O’Connell, Administrator

The Strawberry Creek Lodge is an affordable housing facility for senior citizens. It is adjacent to Strawberry Creek Park and would be directly affected by a new greenway. Lois represents not only senior citizens interests but interested of neighborhood residents as she lives two blocks from the right-of-way. In the interest of senior citizens, she believes that any green space is very welcome. Her comments on the creation of Strawberry Creek Park and its benefits to senior citizens augment her enthusiasm for a new green way. She would like to see more green space which is accommodates pets,

children and the elderly. Parts of the right-of-way can be siphoned off as dog parks and picnic areas connected by a greenway. An area for picnicking and a way of connecting to the Berkeley Way Mini Park and Ohlone greenway would greatly benefit most residents who can no longer drive and depend on pedestrian pathways. She highly recommends the creation of a pedestrian bridge or overpass at the University Avenue intersection because she finds that the traffic might be overwhelming for seniors and children of the new Montessori school.

Seniors and children alike would be able to access the Ohlone greenway and other parks in north Berkeley and take outings more regularly and safely. When asked of her opinion on developing the southern sections of the right-of-way as a greenway, she said she would follow up on a later date.

Neighborhood Groups

Bancroft Way Neighborhood Watch Group Paul Pinkosh, Homeowner and Member

One of the first neighborhood group leaders we contacted was Paul Pinkosh of the Bancroft Way Neighborhood Watch Group. In general, some of their major concerns are crime, traffic, crime reporting and observation and communication.

Paul Pinkosh is a homeowner and we spoke with him at his home on Bancroft and asked if he knew about any upcoming development on the right-of-way. Pinkosh says that “It was not discussed much within [his] group” and subsequently that he “did not have any specific ideas about its development, but that he would like to be involved.” Pinkosh has expressed his fondness for Strawberry Creek Park and that because he has a dog that “perhaps dog runs would be good.”

Pinkosh also has a concern for “environmental issues ... especially with the soils [and] soil contamination (on the right-of-way)”. He added that some members of his group are very “sensitive to air borne pollutants and have complained about the local gas station and auto painting shop around the corner.” Pinkosh added that the “railroads have a history of environmental ‘accidents’ and have practiced negligent activity over the years prior to the forming of the EPA.” When we dug further, asking him what could make him overcome these fears he said that some sort of certifiable testing and soil remediation program would work for him.

We then went on to the topic of other neighborhood concerns such as juvenile crime and drugs. Pinkosh says that “human habits and the negative human uses of public space should not make it closed off for all. The police should patrol the parks on a regular basis, and concluding that, we can have an ongoing effort to clean the place up.” To that end Mr. Pinkosh offered that “the Bancroft Neighborhood Watch could keep [their] eyes open and talk to each other: we communicate and we watch our own street we could just as well follow through on the right-of-way.” When asked how that would work and he said, “we could make daily visits from our group to observe, keep an eye out for needles and stuff and be informants for the Berkeley Police.”

Carleton Neighbors Community Organization
Bill Hofmann, Homeowner and Member

The interest of the Carleton Neighbors Community Organization includes street tree planting activities, developing a tree canopy covering the street, traffic calming, placing utilities underground and a specific interest in making the street an appealing environment for kids and the entire neighborhood. Bill Hofmann is a homeowner and we spoke with him on his home in Berkeley on Carleton Street.

Hofmann says “We know that BOSS is planning something on the right-of-way south of here,” adding “along Dwight there are plans for more community gardens.” He told me that his “wife has been involved with the community orchards group” and he understood that there were “plans to use this block, between Carlton and Ward, as part of the Community Orchards area.” He seemed to like that idea and members of his group have been supporting the community orchard proposal.

His concerns reflected those of any normal homeowner such as noise issues and safety and the negative effects of juvenile parties on the right-of-way. But, when we probed a little deeper he showed his real concerns. He stated that he and his neighbors were concerned with making sure that whatever happens to the right-of-way that the land be maintained as “open space or green space.” He was certain that the group wanted “no increasing [of] the density of [additional] housing because that would not preserve green space.” When asked to be more descriptive of what green space meant for his group, Hofmann replied, “trees, plants, gardens, and orchards.” When asked how those items would serve young children he expressed hope that “designs with play space in mind” would be developed accordingly.

The idea of increasing or maintaining open space is tantamount to any further development. We asked Hofmann to describe what the value of open space was and he interpreted it as contributing to a greater “sense of community.” Asked to describe what community meant to him, Hofmann stated that it meant the ability to “walk down the street and know your neighbors, meet people on the street in a friendly manner, not all people behind closed doors, to the extent that kids can play on the street, that kids can use front yards instead of back yards.”

To that end Hofmann stated that “our group expects to be part of the process of development with the City” and that “we would expect to be informed of public meetings and asked for our input.” Council member Breland has been working with this group on traffic calming issues.

Access is the key word that ties many of these groups together. For the Neighborhood Associations the desire for green space is paramount over any other uses. They want assurances that the right-of-way serves as open space to all communities and that open space, used as garden space, is not locked down to keep the public out. Additionally, they do not think that the in-fill housing and greater density would serve the desire for quality of life improvements in the way that open space would.

Disability Rights Groups

City of Berkeley, Commission on Disability Emily Wilcox, Disability Rights Activist

Emily Wilcox is a Disability Rights activist and a member of the city of Berkeley Commission on Disability (CoD). She stated however that the comments made in our interview with her are her personal opinion and in no way spoken on behalf of the commission. Wilcox stated that she is a person with physical disabilities.

Wilcox said that she knew very little about the right-of-way, except for side conversations related to bicycle access during the Bicycle Subcommittee of the city of Berkeley's Transportation Commission meetings. To her knowledge, the CoD knows "very little to nothing about the project."

Wilcox spoke at great length and in strong terms that the right-of-way should be "equally accessible for all!" She was specific about the needs of persons with disabilities, stating that "certain types of path materials are not suitable for disabled persons." She pointed out where alternatives worked and stated that "at least one community garden used raised beds for people with disabilities," and alternately spoke of other open spaces such as a park for children that had used some new type of ground cover that when tested with wheelchairs, the wheelchairs sank into the material, making it impossible to navigate in the play area. She said that "the issue of people with disabilities cuts both ways," explaining that "sometimes it is the parent with the disability and at other times it is the child with the disability and, so then, it is important to plan recreational/play areas that accommodate both child and parent equally well."

Bicycle/pedestrian paths Ms. Wilcox said are, "shared use designs [and] should reduce conflict." Her example pointed out that curb ramps are not used properly and are institutionally designed for pedestrians that are disabled and are not the domain of cyclists. She stated that when one ramp is used for two modes, the bottleneck that arises from different speeds of travel has the potential for accidents, and expressed her dismay by saying "who likes to get bumped into, that can be injurious and scary."

Wilcox stated that "she would love to have a chance to participate" in future discussions on the right-of-way, and wished she had more time to respond more thoughtfully. She requested that "early on in the future phases please contact the Disabilities Office to put this on the agenda."

Garden Groups

Community Orchards Group Claire Dannenbaum, Project Director

A group of the Santa Fe Right-of-Way neighbors have formed a committee to plan and encourage the city to dedicate two blocks of the right-of-way (from Ward to Carlton) to the creation of a community orchard. Claire Dannenbaum and others heading this committee have interviewed many local residents to find out what they would like to see done with the remaining land, and of the responses, no one has expressed a desire to see the land used for more housing. Their group is asking residents to respond to City Councilmember Linda Maio's amendment to build housing along the stretch. Those

opposing residential units do so because they feel it would increase the crime rate of the area, likening it to the 'run down' housing project off Sacramento Street.

The planned orchard would be a community run project, open to anyone who wants to work in the space, planted with fruiting trees only. The funding for the construction of the orchard would come through donations and the trees from local horticulture centers. The site would be available to school groups and local children as an educational experience, but not as a play area. Due to the fact that a full orchard would take several years to be established, a gleaning station would be set up first, with fresh fruit available at all times.

To get the community involved, there would be workdays once a month, and the lots themselves would be open to the public for several hours on Saturdays and Sundays for gardening; the rest of the time the area would be locked up. Fencing would be necessary for the first several years to discourage vandalism, but would be removed once the orchard is established. Dannenbaum expresses concern over crime in the area, and thinks it may not be safe for children to work in the garden without parental supervision.

"Many children in West Berkeley are undernourished, and maybe being in close proximity to fresh fruits will change that," Dannenbaum said. She stated that urban gardens are few and far between in the area, and that a place to get fresh fruit would be an essential asset for the people in the vicinity, especially if they themselves were building it. According to Dannenbaum, "Without a sense of place and ownership, people don't respect an area (like an empty lot)." Working on the plots would help foster this respect. The only thing she sees as being an issue is getting the funds to pay for water on the land. Setting up a system where rainfall is collected and used to water the trees is a possibility. She said that ideally, once the trees are established, it would be easy to keep them maintained because the water table in the area is fairly high.

Berkeley Community Gardening Collaborative **Beebo Turman, Head of Organization**

Beebo Turman started her work 15 years ago with the creation of the Edible Schoolyard at King Middle School. Its popularity was the catalyst for the formation of the Community Gardening Collaborative (CGC), whose members help run a collection of gardens around Berkeley. The CGC's role in the Santa Fe Right-of-Way planning process has been to assist those groups that are advocating green space on the remaining lots. Turman has met with many other community gardening groups, trying to bring about strength in numbers. She has been working actively with Daniel Miller from BOSS on neighborhood surveys to get input on what people would like to see done with the site. From what they gathered, she said that the residents around the right-of-way think it is a good idea to use some of the remaining blocks for community gardens or parks. Like the other garden groups' members, she expresses concern over the health of low-income people in South and West Berkeley, where the liquor stores far outnumber nearby grocery stores.

Though Turman is excited about the prospect of new community gardens, she sees some issues with the proposition. She asked, "Who will find the time to work on the gardens?" She said many people in the neighborhood have full or part time jobs, and those who are retired may not have the energy to put in the work required to maintain a garden. Turman recalled when her family first moved to their neighborhood, there was a

nearby community garden that was always brown and unhealthy-looking. She said, "Whatever happens on the right-of-way, all measures should be taken to avoid the space falling into disrepair." When we voiced Claire Dannenbaum's concern over water for the plots, Turman suggested rain collection as well. However, for many of the gardens in Community Gardening Collaborative, the city has been willing to provide the water for free. She thinks this should not be a problem for an asset such as a community garden.

Berkeley Youth Alternatives
Patrick McGannon, Head Landscape Architect

Berkeley Youth Alternatives is a series of programs created in 1993 in West Berkeley to serve at-risk youth. One of these programs is getting high school kids to learn about horticulture by working in the BYA gardens, located on parts of the right-of-way. BYA has had little direct interaction with the people and the plans involved in the rest of the Santa Fe Right-of-Way aside from a phone call from a representative of the orchard group who wanted to get kids from BYA to help with manual labor. However, McGannon has a lot of advice for those who will be embarking on the projects. His main concern is crime and vandalism in the new gardens and orchards, and thinks that they probably have not been given enough thought. Vandalism has been a big problem for BYA plots and buildings.

His proposed solution to deterring the crime along the path and in the gardens is to have community members design every aspect of the use of the remaining land, as opposed to having developers bid to do the designs. In his view, if it is some distant entity that plans the blocks, people will have no respect for the area. The key to eliciting respect from people (especially the kids and gangs in the area), he believes is to have them active in every step of the process. "People won't want to work in an area they have had no hand in creating."

The Norteños, a gang composed of mostly Mexican males in their mid-teens, are a big presence in this area of Berkeley and have caused damage on the BYA property. McGannon has gotten kids to stop vandalizing by having them work for their group. Homeless individuals, who sneak into the gardens at night looking for a safe place to sleep, have been a problem for his group as well. His solution to these problems has been to "make vandalism and breaking and entering just a little harder [to make] people give up". He said that graffiti-proof paint will deter kids from vandalism, and an extra lock deter the homeless from breaking in.

As for what plants to put in, McGannon feels the city should stick to its theme of using as many native species as possible and that "people are really into the creek daylighting concept," both which have been done in Strawberry Creek Park. Before planting anything that would be consumed, he said tests for toxins and trash would have to be conducted in the soil. He advised the gardening groups to get advice from experienced horticulturists, as opposed to people who might have their own concepts of good gardening, but whose ideas may be outdated.

**Building Opportunities for Self-Sufficiency (BOSS) Urban Gardening Institute
Daniel Miller, Project Director**

The Urban Gardening Institute is an urban gardening project intended to encourage self-reliance and give training to underprivileged community members. Daniel Miller's proposed site for BOSS is on two vacant lots, at Sacramento and Oregon Streets. Before presenting his proposal, he went door to door, contacting around 1600 people, to get a sense of what the community wanted. 444 people signed a petition to give the group the area. The community stands to benefit from the planned organic nursery, food gardens, outdoor community classroom, through the free talks conducted at the site many times a year, and food that would be sent to local food shelters.

"Because it is a strip, there is a potential for it to be something more than hodge-podge development," Miller said. He explained that there was a flight of supermarkets from the area years ago, and the health of the residents has suffered from it. A food stand will be set up adjacent to the site for people to purchase organic foods from. The group has obtained a 3-year grant from the USDA for the project, and a design has been worked out. The last step is developing the final plan and presenting it to the City Council.

Schools

**Berkeley Montessori Schools
Anne Holmes, University Avenue School Project Director**

Berkeley Montessori School will be building a new campus on the old Santa Fe Railway Depot site at 1310 University Avenue, scheduled to open in February 2004, with plans to include the proposed Santa Fe Right-of-Way trail through the property. The idea behind the new school is a "sustainable campus." Due to what could have been zoning problems from increased traffic from parents dropping their kids off, the trail is intended to encourage kids to walk to school instead of getting rides. The school wants to maintain the historical significance of the site through their design, while maintaining ecological and communitarian principles. They will have a joint parking lot with the Netivot Shalom Synagogue to be built next door along with an organic garden for kids, parents, and interested neighbors.

The school was able to obtain permission to construct such an extensive and traffic inducing project by allowing the city to run the bicycle/pedestrian path intended to span most of the Santa Fe Right-of-Way through their property; the city and the school are working together in the design of the path. The old landowners would not allow a bicycle path to run through the property, so the schools concession is a major step forward. It would have been difficult for the school to obtain the permit to build without some solution to traffic increase.

City Commissions and Departments

Transportation Commission

Regular Meeting, February 20, 2003, North Berkeley Senior Center, 7:00 PM

During the Transportation Commission Meeting many issues were addressed. The following is an excerpt from what the commission and community members discussed.

A multi-use trail might result in problems due to inability to separate the variety of uses. There might be some trouble with handling agitated residents who lived right up against the right-of-way and are against any community use. No tunnels should be implemented in the trail if a trail were to exist. Attention should be given to how construction of a trail would affect sunlight and shade. There was also talk of using Santa Rosa Lights at intersections to help pedestrians and to show that the trail continues between streets.

Parks & Recreation Commission

Regular Meeting, February 24, 2003, North Berkeley Senior Center, 7:00 PM

Not wanting a repeat of the skate park that oozes toxic groundwater, the Parks and Recreation Commission had concerns about making sure the soil remediation plans were in place before development of the right-of-way proceeded to far ahead of itself. Another concern that was voiced at the commission meeting was that while certain groups, such as BOSS, had advanced their proposals for use of parts of the right-of-way the commission thought that it would better serve the whole community if all proposals were heard before access on the right-of-way was allowed. The commission was hoping to avoid a "first come, first served" approach to right-of-way development.

While the Parks and Recreation Commission might make use of open space with accessibility for all, the suggestion that some gardens are fenced off and locked or that they might serve only those with a strong interest in gardening may not be considered full use. We walked away with the impression that the commission desired a comprehensive and cohesive approach to development.

Berkeley Police Department

Suppression of Crime and Drug Activity, Vigorous Law Enforcement, and Improved Quality of Life

Several the Offices of the Berkeley Police Department

We were unable to contact a proper spokesperson from the Berkeley Police Department. Although we made several attempts over several days to speak with the proper personnel we were unable to contact any people with the ability to speak freely or answer any of the six simple interview questions. Attempts to conduct interviews over the phone or request appointments were made to no avail as was visiting the police station in person.

We spoke with five people at the police department and each referred me to another spokesperson of higher authority. Unfortunately, the spokespersons were also

unavailable to comment. Most of the police personnel we spoke with knew where the right-of-way was but did not give any indication that they knew of any pending development along the right-of-way. We were surprised that the Berkeley Police Department was not aware of any future development.

Each officer or representative became skittish when they were asked the interview questions. Some were slightly helpful at trying to direct my call but all were eventually defensive and tactical in deflecting my inquiry. We were left with the impression that although we may have personalized this experience, the Berkeley Police Department was not very concerned about reuse issues on the right-of-way.

As the role of the Berkeley Police is to serve the community by enforcing laws in all scenarios it is their responsibility to protect the rights of property owners as well as all citizens of the community to use open public spaces. Neighborhood groups interviewed also expressed a desire to “step in,” by reporting crimes and acting as liaisons with police about suspicious park activity.

Parks and Bicycle Groups

Parks and bicycle stakeholders preferred creating a multi-use trail from at least Strawberry Creek Park to the Ohlone Greenway with various small community projects South of Strawberry Creek Park. In these southernmost blocks, safety is one of the main concerns.

There are many groups both under the umbrella organization of Berkeley Partners for Parks and independent from them. These groups are dedicated to the improvement of parks, community gardens and open space in Berkeley. Many of the people in the parks and bicycle groups have previously walked or biked on the Santa Fe Right-of-Way and/or have been involved in community discussions for its future uses. Others are aware of its significance for the City of Berkeley but have not previously voiced their opinions regarding the Santa Fe Right-of-Way. These stakeholders include:

- Friends of 5 Creeks, Friends of Strawberry Creek
- Friends of Jon Hinkel Park
- Friends of Dorothy Bolte Park
- Friends of Aquatic Park
- Friends of Grove Park
- Friends of Halycon Commons
- Friends of Ohlone Park
- Friends of Shorebird Nature Center
- Friends of 63rd Street Mini Park
- Friends of Totland
- Friends of Willard Park
- Friends of Hooper Commons Association
- Los Amigos de Codornices
- Los Chicos de Codornices
- Pillars of Community
- Poetry Garden at the Berkeley Arts Magnet Elementary School
- Paths of Northeast Berkeley
- Berkeley Path Wanderers Association

- Estuary Action Challenge, Green Resource Center
- Sustainable Agriculture Education (SAGE)
- Urban Roots
- Greenbelt Alliance East Bay Office
- Center for Biological Diversity and
- People’s Park Advisory Board

The Bicycle groups include:

- Bicycle-Friendly Berkeley Coalition
- Bike The Bridge Coalition
- Berkeley Ecological and Safe Transportation Coalition (Berkeley BEST)

Although adamant about the right-of-way, many of the parks and bicycle stakeholders have voiced their concerns on several key issues. The main concern is safety. Susan Schwartz of Friends of Five Creeks explained that the neighbors near Lincoln Street are concerned with theft near their property if the right-of-way were to be opened up as a multi-use trail. Mark Lious of Friends of Aquatic Park touched upon the evident problem of homeless people using the Santa Fe Right-of-Way as a place to sleep. He explained that there are at least 25 homeless persons in the right-of-way area that have been living there permanently for the last fifteen years. However, Mark Lious explained that the suggestion made by other stakeholders of fencing and locking the right-of-way might not be a good idea, specifically trying to keep the area locked north of University Avenue. Lious felt that the area just south of Strawberry Creek might be a problem adding that it might help if police monitored the area more frequently. Another suggestion is to either enlarge the trail or create two trails, similar to the Ohlone Greenway, so that different users (such as bicyclists and pedestrians) do not pose a hazard to each other. Arthur Eaton suggested speed limit signs so the trail would be safer for seniors, children and disabled persons. Dave Campbell felt intersections, especially near high traffic areas like University Avenue, needed to be designed to allow for safer crossing. Campbell suggests employing traffic engineers to “think outside of the box and make [the right-of-way] a safe pathway for both bicyclists and pedestrians.”

Consensus Proposal

The overall view from stakeholders on how to use the Santa Fe Right-of-Way is a multi-use trail from at least Strawberry Creek to the Ohlone Greenway. These stakeholders voiced many reasons as to why they believed this was the optimum use of the open space:

- Arthur Eaton of Friends of Grove Park emphasized the need of “walking space without constant surrounding automobile traffic.”
- Vanessa Moraga of Friends of Dorothy Bolte Park stressed the need for a greenway that “advocates communal access.”
- Mark Lious of Friends of Aquatic Park envisions a through pedestrian integrated pathway the length of the Santa Fe Right-of-Way similar to other Rails-to-Trails projects around the country. A pedestrian-bike trail that offered various uses for the community is what Susan Schwartz of Friends of Five Creeks hopes for.

- Beebo Turman of Berkeley Community Garden Collaborative says “A lot of people love this idea for the trail because there are more perks in North Central Berkeley than Southern Berkeley. People don’t stop and say we need open space however. Once the trail is made the community would love it.”
- Dave Campbell of the Bicycle-Friendly Berkeley Coalition summed the overall sentiment of these groups by stating the community wished for a multi-use pathway and park for that could allow neighbors to live in a better community by providing pleasant green open space to soften the city.

Other Ideas for Usage

While the stakeholders all agree the best use for the right-of-way would be a multi-use trail, they also have many interesting opinions about details to include on the trails. Many groups supported the concept of a community orchard for sections of the right-of-way that may be too narrow or close to residential neighbors. One suggestion was to create a program similar to Berkeley Youth Alternatives on the right-of-way. In light of community orchards, many of the stakeholders felt active participants of the neighboring areas should care for them. Although, Mark Liou of Friends of Aquatic Park adamantly expressed that the full responsibility of the Santa Fe Right-of-Way, despite which area and what type of community function it served, belongs to the city park officials.

Many suggestions involve small enhancements to beautify the Santa Fe Right-of-Way. Benches with historical information about the right-of-way can serve as a resting spot and educational tool for the children. Artwork by the community on fencing, if fencing was to exist, or on the ground is another unanimous suggestion. Native plants and informational plaques is another proposed idea for beautification. A universal marker to help give a sense of cohesion to the multi-use trail can be implemented throughout the Santa Fe Right-of-Way. Adding basketball courts and even a BMX Bike trail to existing sports areas was another suggestion voiced many times.

CONCLUSION

Through the information obtained from surveys and stakeholder interviews, it is clear that many groups and individuals would like to see most, if not all, of the Santa Fe Right-of-Way remain “green.” Although there is this general consensus amongst groups, there is no definite choice of what type of specific uses should be developed on the right-of-way.

Though the garden groups have a bias, the surveys give an initial indication that local residents are not enthusiastic about any kind of housing developments on the remaining land either. The rest of the stakeholder groups, including many who advocate for affordable housing, are also uninterested in any more housing developments on the right-of-way land. Much of the current evidence from our objective analyses, such as land use observation and demographics, doesn’t necessarily support the opinions of many of the stakeholders.

It is also important to note the concerns over safety in proposed parks and gardens and greenways. As some of the areas surrounding the right-of-way are notorious for crime, citizens want to see extra care taken to avoid encouraging drug dealers or delinquents from destroying the community's work. Given the conflicting evidence supplied by different teams, there is no definite conclusion as to whether there is an actual crime problem on the right-of-way, but there has been much discussion on about increasing safety, appropriate police presence and fencing where necessary.

The next step is to open and extend the discussion further. Expanded discussions with local residents and neighborhoods groups will be important to determine the validity of our work in general. In the near future, it will be vital to monitor the progress of the existing and planned developments on and near the Santa Fe Right-of-Way, such as the Berkeley Montessori School, BOSS Urban Gardening Institute, Netivot Shalom Synagogue, existing city parks, and the budgeted University to Delaware greenway, and make plans and decisions accordingly that will reflect the best interests of local residents and the city as a whole.